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Bible History References

EXPLANATORY NOTES

on the

Lessons Embodied in the "Comprehensive Bible History for Lutheran Schools"

Vol. I: Old Testament Stories

With Maps and Illustrations

By F. RUPPRECHT

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Introductory Remarks.

For several centuries the opinion was held quite generally, and with the greatest emphasis within the Lutheran Church itself, that Luther and his coworkers had used only the Catechism for the instruction and indoctrination of such as were prepared for confirmation and for the young in general. But recent investigations have demonstrated conclusively that this tradition was a mistake. From the very beginning of the Reformation movement the teachers of the Church were desirous of having all its members learn the stories of the Bible as well as the systematic form of doctrine as contained in that consummate masterpiece of human books, Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism. This was the purpose of the *Passionale Christi* compiled by Luther; this was the object, also, of the various collections of pericopes made during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Between 1525 and 1580 the instruction in Bible History occupied an independent position in the course of study, and this place of excellence was maintained for more than a century and a half. The discovery of this fact has once more given educators of the Lutheran Church the proper appreciation of the importance which attaches to the teaching of Bible History.

This fact has brought out, as a natural consequence of the renewed interest in the subject, the need of more material to assist in proper instruction in Bible History. Every teacher ought to have in his possession not only the information pertaining to the immediate presentation of the facts of the lesson in a general way, but also that which is associated with the wider historical, social, economic, and archeological background of the lesson, together with

its doctrinal application. The wider the information which is at the teacher's command, the better will be his equipment for the work of instructing the young.

The book which is here offered, BIBLE HISTORY REFERENCES, now in its second, revised, and enlarged form (Vol. I, covering only the stories of the Old Testament), meets the requirements of the new appreciation of Bible History in a most excellent manner. The word explanation of difficult expressions is simple and concise, the references to geographical features are clear, and all other material is presented in a manner most conducive to best presentation of the lesson. A feature of the revised text is the reference to Catechism passages, to hymns, and to chapters in the Bible in which further doctrinal and historical material is found. In short, the enlarged REFERENCES will prove of great value to all who are engaged in teaching Bible History, whether this be in Christian day-schools or in Sunday-schools.

PAUL E. KRETZMANN.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.
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From the Creation to the Tower of Babel.

(4000—2000 B. C.) Gen 1, 2

The Bible records comprising the first epoch of the world's history tell us how God created heaven and earth, particularly, how He made man in His image, and gave him a most beautiful spot on this earth to dwell in; how man, alas! abused this kindness of his Maker by listening to Satan, and transgressing an explicit command of God, and subsequently heaping one sin upon the other; how our first parents witnessed with their own eyes the transmission of their now sinful nature to their progeny (original sin); how sinfulness spread to such a fearful extent that God, in the Deluge, almost annihilated all mankind; how, even after this most dire punishment, sin again grew rampant, especially selfishness and pride, which moved God in His ire to visit upon man the confusion of tongues and the consequent scattering abroad of the human race over the whole face of the earth.

But God, who is Love, desirous of saving man from the ruin wrought by sin, both temporal and eternal, immediately after the Fall promised to send the *Woman's Seed*, the Redeemer from sin and the devil, and, after the Deluge, had His prophet Noah designate *Shem* as the ancestor of her of whom the Messiah should be born.

1. The Creation.

As "every house is builded by some man" (Heb. 3, 4), thus also this great universe, which serves as a dwelling-place for man, owes its existence to a great Builder, Almighty God. But God is not merely the *Great Architect,* He is the *Creator* of the universe.

The First Day — Cosmic Light.

In the beginning — When absolutely nothing was in existence besides God. Ps. 90, 2. "As long as God existed, there was no time."

Created — To create means to "bring forth something out of nothing by the mere power of the word"; to "call those things which be not as though they were." Rom. 4, 17. (Cat., Qu. 110.)

God — The Triune God. Ps. 33, 6; Rev. 4, 11.

The heaven and the earth — "The material substance of the universe," including all things of which we have any knowledge.

Without form — Shapeless, unorganized mass.

Void — Empty, bare; not occupied; without decorative growth of any kind.

Darkness — No light whatever having as yet been created, the darkness was such that no human eye would have been able to penetrate it.

Deep — The rushing waters. 2 Pet. 3, 5.

Spirit of God — The Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

Moved upon the face of the waters — Brooding, as it were, communicating warmth, imparting life and vigor.

God said — The Person of the Holy Trinity that spoke was God the Son. John 1, 1ff. (Cat., Qu. 132; John 1, 3; Heb. 1, 3.) — "It is not words of grammar that God speaks, but true, essential things." (Luther.)

Let there be light — Diffused elemental or cosmic light. God ordained that there should be a change of light and darkness at fixed intervals; for He "divided the light from the darkness." 2 Cor. 4, 6.

And it was light — "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33, 9; 148, 5.

The evening and the morning — The evening is mentioned first because darkness reigned at first, and then light was created. The Jews for this reason began each new day with the setting of the sun.

First day — A day of twenty-four hours; no "periods."

The Second Day — the Firmament.

Firmament — The sky, or heavens; "the great arch or expanse over our heads." Instead of the dense mists and vapors resting everywhere on the watery expanse, there came a separation into dense clouds above and the waters beneath, with a clean space between.

Heaven (or heavens) — The region of the air, or the sky-dome above us.

The Third Day — Sea and Land.

One place — There were to be separate bodies of land and water. "God here finished His work on inanimate water."

Earth — "The solid materials which make up the globe, in distinction from the air or water."

Grass — Food for the beasts of the field, Ps. 104, 14; all the smaller plants.

Herb — Vegetables and grain of all kinds; the larger plants.

Fruit-tree — All the trees "yielding fruit," both the so-called fruit-trees and the trees of the forest. "Able to reproduce their kind and species by means of seed and fruit."

The Fourth Day — the Luminaries.

Lights — Luminaries, bodies giving, emitting, light; sun ("the greater light"), moon ("the lesser light"), and the starry host of heaven. They were to "divide the day from the night," and "be for signs" (to wit, of the weather, Matt. 16, 2 ff.; of extraordinary events, Matt. 2, 2; Luke 21, 25; 23, 44; mariners' guides; polar star), "for seasons" (of the year; also festival seasons, *e. g.,* Easter), "for days" (shorter and longer, according to the season), "and years" (now calculated according to the sun, in ancient times according to both the sun and moon).

Rule — Sun and moon rule by giving, or hiding from us, their light.

The Fifth Day — Fishes and Birds.

Abundantly — God is a liberal Giver; nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the Biblical record of creation. Ps. 104, 24. "The earth is full of Thy riches." In particular, there are "things creeping innumerable" in the "great and wide sea," v. 25.

Moving creature — Animals moving about in the water. "Lower animal life in water and air."

Fowl that may fly — Animal life animating the air; birds, also all kinds of winged insects. Lev. 11, 20.

Whales — This includes all the big sea animals; "sea monsters."

Blessed them — Gave them vigor to multiply their kind.

THE SIXTH DAY — ANIMALS ON LAND — MAN.

Cattle — All the domestic animals; animals that can be tamed and made to serve man even now in his sinful state.

Creeping thing — Reptiles, worms, etc.

Beast of the earth — Beasts of the field; the wild animals.

Us — The Triune God. "God held a special council session with Himself" when He created man.

Our image, Our likeness — Consisting in "righteousness and true holiness," Eph. 4, 24, and in a blessed knowledge of their Creator and Lord, Col. 3, 10. (Cat., Qu. 116. 117.)

Blessed them — A twofold blessing is given man: fruitfulness and full dominion over the entire animal world.

Behold — Said for the sake of emphasis. The Holy Spirit wishes to draw our attention particularly to the following statement.

Very good — Perfect. The seventh time Scripture not merely says, "It was good," but, "It was very good," because man was the crowning feature of God's creation.

SUMMARY.

1. Day: Light.
2. Day: Region of air.
3. Day: Land and all growth thereon.
4. Day: Luminaries.
5. Day: Animals living in air and water.
6. Day: Animals on land; — man.

THE SEVENTH DAY — THE SABBATH.

Finished — Both visible and invisible creation.

The host of them — Innumerable creatures of all kinds. Ps. 104, 24.

Rested — Discontinued the work of immediate creation, "and was refreshed." Ex. 31, 17.

Blessed the seventh day and sanctified it — Bestowed upon it a special blessing. Setting it apart from the previous

six days, He gave it a greater significance; ordained it to be a day of blessing for man. — To "sanctify" means to set apart for the service of God.

Heb. 11, 3 — We children of God "understand" how the world was created by God, but only because God has revealed it to us and enlightened our understanding; "through faith." — "Not made of things which do appear," hence "out of nothing," as Luther has so aptly rendered it in the German Bible. — The creation of the world clearly shows us that God is *almighty* (note — besides Heb. 11, 3 — Rom. 4, 17: "He calleth those things *which be not* as though they were"), *all-wise* ("In wisdom hast Thou made them all," Ps. 104, 24), and *good* ("It was very good").

Catechism: First Article ("God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth"). Cat., Qu. 104 ("omnipotent, omniscient, . . . benevolent").

Hymns: 394, 1; 261, 2; 60, 1—3; 61; 63, 3; 70, 3. 4; 78, 2; 292, 1—4. 7.*

Bible Readings: Ps. 104; Job 38; Ps. 148; John 1, 1—14.

Annotational Matter.

What is the Meaning of "Day" in This Account of Creation? Are the days mentioned there days consisting of twenty-four hours, or are they "divine periods," as many in our days would have it? *Answer:* They are days in the present meaning of the word. 1) "Day" in Holy Writ almost always signifies a period of twenty-four hours. Why, then, should it mean something else in the story of Creation, which is told in such plain words and therefore demands a literal interpretation? And what makes it still clearer is the fact that the words "evening" and "morning" are employed to designate these seven days. They were days each of which had an evening and a morning. — 2) The six days of creation, together with the day of rest, are intended to correspond exactly to the six working-days, which are followed by the Sabbath. (Cf. Ex. 20, 9—11; 31, 15—17.)

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* Unless otherwise designated, the numbers of hymns given in this book are to be found in *Ev. Luth. Hymn-Book.*

Nor does the fact that the Holy Record speaks of days before the sun was made carry any weight with it; for we read of a change of light and darkness before that great luminary orb of heaven was created. Since this change was called day and night by God Himself, it certainly was just what He expressly called it. — Passages such as 2 Pet. 3, 8; Ps. 90, 4 (2 Cor. 6, 2; Rom. 13, 12) do not come into consideration here.

2. Man and Paradise. Gen 2.

Because man is the foremost of all of God's visible creatures, the story of his creation is retold in the second chapter of Genesis, and more fully than in the first chapter.

Creation of Adam.

Dust of the ground — God Himself formed man's body (Cat., Qu. 116) as a potter forms a vessel out of clay. Ps. 139, 14. He, as it were, bestowed greater care upon him who is "the summit and goal of creation."

Breath of life — God's almighty power gave life to the lifeless clay formed into a human body. Job 33, 4; Ps. 33, 6.

A living soul — Man was endowed with the preeminent faculty of reason. The soul is not, as it were, a piece, or fragment, of the divine essence, but it was created. It is immortal. The fact of man's being endowed with an immortal soul and of his being made in the image of God shows his superiority over the irrational brutes.

The Garden.

Planted a garden — Inexpressibly beautiful, especially selected as an abode for man, upon the beautifying of which God had bestowed particular care.

Eden — Meaning bliss or a pleasant, lovely, charming spot. Generally called Paradise = pleasure-garden, park. Very likely situated between the Euphrates and Tigris — probably in what was later Babylonia.

Pleasant to the sight — It aroused a sense of intense pleasure and delight to look at these trees.

Good for food — They bore delicious fruit.

Tree of life — Man was allowed to eat of this tree. It gave him the power to renew, rejuvenate, life, to remain in a state of perpetual youth.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil — A tree by which man's obedience was to be proved, or tested. (Cat., Qu. 257.)

The Divine Command.

Dress — Sow, plant, and harvest.

Keep — Man was to take good care of the garden, so that it would retain its beauty. — Even in the state of sinlessness God wanted man to work, and not to be idle; much more so now. — The tree of knowledge of good and evil was no poisonous tree; consequently it was not the eating of the fruit itself that brought on death, but the fact that he disobeyed God's command. (Cf. the third question in Parts IV and VI of the Catechism, respectively.) — God's command also contained a prohibition ("thou shalt not") and a threat ("in the day . . . surely die").

The Helpmeet.

It is not good — The union of man and wife (matrimony) was to be something "good," a good thing, for both.

An help meet for him — Woman's province is to be a helpmeet to her husband in both temporal and spiritual matters.

Adam gave names to all cattle, etc. — Proof of the great wisdom even in earthly matters with which he was endowed in the state of innocence.

Not found, etc. — Not one of the animals was fit to be his companion through life.

Deep sleep — Not an ordinary, natural sleep, but a sleep produced by God for a special purpose.

One of his ribs — Woman is taken from man and created for man's, the husband's, sake. Acts 17, 26.

Made He a woman — On the sixth day. Thus Adam's desire to have a companion and a helpmeet was gratified.

This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh — Adam had not found "an help meet for him" when God brought all the animals to him "to see what he would call them." But now that He brought a human being to him that had been formed by Him from one of his ribs, — now, he means to say, I have finally found what I was looking and wishing for, — one who is my equal. — *Institution of matrimony.* (Cat., Qu. 51.) — Here again Adam gives proof of the great wisdom that was his before the Fall. He at once knew that this woman had been made by God from his own flesh and bones.

Were not ashamed — Because their hearts harbored no evil lust. Theirs was a perfect innocence, and they lived in blessed communion with God. — Now we call one a coarse, rude fellow who is void of the feeling of shame. Shamefacedness is a virtue and is a true guardian of innocence.

Eph. 4, 24 — The nuptial garments of the first bridal pair were wisdom, innocence, and righteousness. (Cat., Qu. 117.)

Catechism: First Article ("God has made me"). Sixth Commandment.

Hymns: 78, 2; 442; 63, 3. 4; 65, 6; 62, 1—3. 6; 60, 3; 559, 7.

Bible Readings: Rev. 21, 1—7; Deut. 30, 11—20; Matt. 19, 3—9.

Annotational Matter.

By giving man a "help meet for him," God instituted holy matrimony; and this was in Paradise. Matrimony, therefore, is not a human ordinance, but a divine institution. We furthermore learn from the story of Creation that "the husband is the head of the wife"; "for Adam was first formed, then Eve." 1 Tim. 2, 13. The fact that woman was taken from one of the ribs of man goes to show that she is not to be her husband's slave, as was and is the case among some heathen nations, particularly savages, but his helpmeet, and that the union of man and wife is to be lifelong and hence indissoluble; "for what God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Matt. 19, 6.

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3. The Fall of Man. Gen 3

Adam and Eve were happy in every respect — image of God; blissful abode; dominion over all creatures; clear and fully enlightened understanding; blessed communion with God; entire absence of anything that may be called an evil: no bodily ailment, etc. Alas! this happy condition was of but short duration. The greatest of all evils, sin, came into the world.

The Temptation.

Serpent — A real serpent — used by Satan as his tool. Rev. 12, 9.

More subtile — Wiser; see Matt. 10, 16. More cunning, wily, crafty; see 2 Cor. 11, 3.

He said — Satan, speaking through the serpent.

Woman — Being the weaker vessel. (1 Pet. 3, 7.)

Yea, hath God said? — Satan wants to excite doubt in Eve's mind. — "I cannot believe it; God cannot be so cruel as to plant those beautiful trees with their delicious fruit, and then forbid to eat of them!"

We may eat — Parleying with temptation.

Ye shall not eat of it — Eve knows God's command well enough.

Neither shall ye touch it — Here she falsifies God's command, adding something to His words.

Ye shall not surely die — Satan charges God with a falsehood. — Do not believe that you will be punished; you need not fear any such thing! — But *he*, Satan, is the liar, the father of lies. John 8, 44. (Cat., Qu. 115.)

Your eyes shall be opened — This implied that until now God had kept them in sad ignorance regarding matters which they ought to know.

Ye shall be as gods — Equal with God.

Knowing good and evil — He goads her on to pride. — Jesus' conduct over against the Tempter was entirely different.

The Fall.

A tree to be desired — The evil desire was aroused within her. Jas. 1, 14. 15. — First doubt, then unbelief. Her fall was accomplished as soon as she falsified God's command.

To make one wise — As Satan had cunningly persuaded her to believe: "Ye shall be," etc.

She took, etc. — The way of sin: first the evil desire of the heart, then the evil deed. Matt. 15, 19. The battle lost!

Gave also unto her husband, etc. — The sinner, in the power of the devil, cannot but entice others.

The Consequences.

Eyes . . . were opened — Now they saw that the devil had most miserably deceived them. Consciousness of sin and shame. (Cat., Qu. 258. Hymn 381, 1.)

Fig-leaves — Most likely the leaves of the plantain-tree. They are from five to six feet long and a foot and a half wide. — A feeling of shame came over them.

Voice of the Lord God — The Lord came to them "in the cool of the day," *i. e.,* in the evening.

Adam — "Adam means *man* in Hebrew; hence we may say *man* wherever we read *Adam.*" (Luther.)

Hid themselves — Having a bad conscience, they stood in quivering awe of the holy God, whom heretofore they had been wont to meet "with the glad confidence of innocence." — Sin had already blinded them so that they hoped they might be able to hide themselves before the all-seeing God.

Afraid because I was naked — The first lie. He feared his Creator and Lord because of his disobedience. The plea of nakedness was unwittingly a confession of guilt.

Whom Thou gavest to be with me — Adam blames God for having fallen into sin, for giving him a helpmeet that tempted him to transgress His commandment!

The serpent beguiled me — By prevailing upon me, by wheedling me into this sin. — Neither of the two admits being guilty. Both try to palliate, extenuate, belittle, and — forget what they have done.

The Consequence. — 1) The feeling of shame is aroused in Adam and Eve. 2) They endeavor to cover their sin. 3) Fear and bad conscience. 4) Selfish attempt to escape punishment, each at the expense of the God-given partner.

Punishment and Promise.

Cursed above . . . every beast — Because thou hast permitted thyself to be used as Satan's tool to seduce man made in My image, therefore no animal shall henceforth be as abominable and so deeply debased as thou.

Upon thy belly — Must no longer walk upright. Eat its food mixed with dust.

I will put enmity, etc. — The Redeemer promised. "God *so loved* the world," etc. — God Himself separates the devil and his seed, "the children of the Wicked One," from Christ, the Woman's Seed, and the children of the Kingdom.

It shall bruise thy head — The Woman's Seed, the Savior, will destroy the devil. 1 John 3, 8; Heb. 2, 14; 1 Cor. 15, 57. (Cat., Qu. 154.)

Bruise His heel — Which was done when Christ suffered and died upon the cross. But at the same time that the Old Serpent bruised Christ's heel, He bruised his head.

In sorrow, etc. — The bearing, caring for, and rearing of children, which in the state of innocence would have been a source of delight, was now to abound in sorrows, burdens, sacrifices, etc.

Rule over thee — Because she was the first one to be deceived, 1 Tim. 2, 14, she was to be in subjection to her husband; she was from now on to regard him as her lord. 1 Pet. 3, 6.

Cursed is the ground — It shall no longer bring forth fruit of its own accord. — In Paradise it had been a *pleasure* to work; now it became a *burden.*

Thorns and thistles — Weeds, notwithstanding diligent labor. In Paradise the soil yielded a plentiful harvest most willingly.

The herb of the field — No longer the delicious fruit growing in Paradise.

In the sweat of thy face — Work now was to be hard and tedious, burdensome and oppressive.

Return unto the ground — The body of man shall see corruption. Since the Fall, Death holds dominion over man. (Cat., Qu. 85; Rom. 6, 23. Qu. 86, Ezek. 18, 20.)

MAN EXPELLED FROM PARADISE.

Wife's name Eve — *i. e.*, "life," "source of life." Both believed the promise of the Woman's Seed and put their trust in it.

Coats of skins — *i. e.*, of animals. Clothing must be worn in consequence of man's falling into sin.

Drove out — They did not want to leave Paradise, but were compelled to do so.

Cherubim — Princes among the heavenly host. — Two cherubim of gold were placed "on the two ends of the mercy-seat" of the Ark of the Covenant. Ex. 37, 7 ff.

To keep the way of the tree of life — This was an act of divine love and goodness, as otherwise there would have been no end of misery. (Hymn 157, 8.)

Rom. 5, 12 — "In Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15, 22); in Christ, the second Adam, all may gain life (Rom. 5, 18. 19). "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6, 23.

CATECHISM: Sixth and Seventh Petitions; Close of Commandments.

HYMNS: 413, 2; 420, 2; 422, 2; 417, 2.

BIBLE READINGS: Jas. 1, 13—15; Eph. 6, 10—17; Rom. 5, 12—21; Ps. 90; Titus 2, 11—14.

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4. Cain and Abel.

By Adam sin came into the world. Parents need but take due cognizance of the faults and evil inclinations of their children to be convinced that sin has "passed upon all men," that sin is the dreadful heirloom from parent to child. Even in Adam's family sin soon showed its hideous face. This condition will prevail till Judgment Day. Matt. 13, 49. (Cat., Qu. 191.)

THE SACRIFICE — GOD'S WARNING.

Eve = Life, life-giving spring. In giving his wife that name, Adam gave evidence of the faith that was in him; for the Seed of the Woman was to be born of woman. — In the

Old Covenant God's children were saved by the same faith that we New Testament Christians have, the sole difference being that they believed in the Savior to *come,* while now He *has come* who is our hope of salvation. They lived in the dawn of morning, while we see the Sun of Righteousness in its noon brightness.

Cain — Gain, possession. Eve thought she had born the promised Woman's Seed. "I have gotten a man from the Lord" really means, as Luther has correctly translated the Hebrew text: "I have *the* Man, *the Lord,*" to wit, the Savior from sin, death, and the devil.

And she again bare — namely, a male child, a brother of Cain, and she called him —

Abel — "Breath; transitoriness; vanity." She had come to recognize ever better the vanity of this life.

Keeper of sheep — a shepherd; a type of Christ.

Tiller of the ground — Husbandman, farmer.

Offering — Sacrifice. There can be no doubt that God gave our first parents all the instructions needed about the sacrifice; for self-elected works are not pleasing to Him. Abel's sacrifice, however, was acceptable to Him.

Fruit of the ground — Grain products.

Firstlings of his flock — The best lambs, first-born lambkins.

The Lord had respect to — Gave an evident sign of His pleasure, which the two brothers did not fail to understand. What this sign was we do not know. (Comp. Lev. 9, 24; 1 Kings 18, 38.) — Mark well that Abel is mentioned before reference is had to his sacrifice; first the *person,* then the *work* of that person. It is not the gift God regards, but the giver. Gen. 4, 7 and Heb. 11, 4 show that Cain was devoid of faith and true piety; hence his sacrifice could not please God. Rom. 14, 23. (Comp. Luke 18, 9—14, Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.)

Very angry — Grudge against God; envy and hatred against his brother.

His countenance fell — Wrath and anger plainly showed in his face. People who are angry go about with their heads

hanging down; depressed, chap-fallen. — God's words to Cain contained a *question,* a *statement,* and a *warning.* He wished to impress upon Cain that he had no reason to be angry. If thou believest in the Woman's Seed, "thou shalt be accepted"; if not, "sin lieth at the door" of thy heart like a lurking wild beast. 1 Pet. 5, 8.

Doest well — No one can "do well," do anything pleasing to God, unless faith dwells in his heart. That was lacking in Cain.

Lieth at the door — Lying in ambush, like a wild beast ready to spring upon you.

Unto thee shall be his desire — If faith rules in the heart, the sinful "desire" can and will be overcome.

CAIN'S FRATRICIDE — GOD'S PUNISHMENT.

Cain talked with Abel — Simulated brotherly love, so that Abel did not hesitate to go out into the field with him. Cain permitted sin to rule over him. He "was of that Wicked One." 1 John 3, 12.

Slew him — Fifth Commandment. Hate grew into actual murder. (Cat., Qu. 47. Hymn 247, 7.)

Where is Abel, thy brother? — God knew where he was; He desired to bring Cain to a full realization of his tremendous sin, so that he would repent of his foul deed.

I know not. Am I, etc. — What does my brother concern me? (Jude 11), — instead of saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" — Bids God *defiance, lies* impudently, and is a *hypocrite.*

Thy brother's blood crieth, etc. — Demands vengeance and punishment. It was a sin crying to heaven. Rev. 6, 10. — The blood of Christ pleads for mercy for the sinner. Heb. 12, 24. (Hymn 312, 4; 208, 4.)

CAIN'S THREEFOLD PUNISHMENT. — 1) He shall be *cursed* on earth, during his life on earth. A temporal punishment; but since he did not repent, the divine curse extends into eternity. 2) *"The ground shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength"* — shall yield less to thee than before. (Comp. what God told Adam after the Fall.) 3) *"A fugitive*

and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" — no rest, no peace; his evil conscience will not suffer him to abide long at one place. "Vagabond" is here to be taken in its original meaning: one who wanders from place to place, without a fixed habitation.

Cain Seized with Fear — God's Long-Suffering.

My punishment is greater, etc.— German Bible: "My *sin* is greater," etc. Just like Judas. He is not concerned about the great sin he committed, but about the punishment, the consequences of the evil deed. No true repentance. (Hymn 415, 5.)

Thou hast driven me out, etc. — Out of the land where he had lived up to that time. He now became a "vagabond exile," without any settled habitation.

From Thy face shall I be hid — He would no longer live with his parents, would be banished from the family worship, and daily experience God's wrath — however, only because he would not repent.

Slay me — He now feared the avenger of blood. See Num. 35, 19.

Mark — What kind of mark it was it is useless to conjecture. — Because God desired to give Cain ample time for repentance, He did not allow any one to kill him, as he had deserved.

Went out from the presence of the Lord — God's gracious presence is meant. God is present with His grace wherever His Gospel is proclaimed. Cain left the Church of God. Self-excommunication.

Land of Nod — Nod means exile.

Adam's Progeny.

In his own likeness — Just as sinful as Adam. See Ps. 51, 7; John 3, 6. (Cat., Qu. 95. 118.)

Seth = Compensation, i. e., for the loss of pious Abel; for thus Eve said herself (Gen. 4, 25): "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." — Seth is the ancestor of the God-fearing patriarchs before the Flood.

Enoch walked with God — Held continual intercourse with God in prayer, delighted in meditating upon the promise of the Savior.

God took him — He did "not see death." Heb. 11, 5. God translated him, while living, to the eternal mansions of bliss.

Catechism: — Fifth Commandment. (Cat., Qu. 315.)

Hymns: 421, 1. 2; 426, 1; 347, 2; 413, 1. 2; 312, 1—6.

Bible Readings: Ps. 139, 1—12; Rom. 6, 12—23; 1 John 3, 10—18.

Annotational Matter.

The High Age of the Patriarchs. — The patriarchs of God's Church before the Flood whose names are recorded Gen. 5 lived nigh unto a thousand years, with the exception of Enoch, whom God took from this vale of tears without his having tasted death. God's purpose in letting these patriarchs, who were His preachers, attain to such a remarkably high age was to build up His Kingdom of Grace among the fast multiplying human race. All were to hear the promise of the Woman's Seed. — In this way it was also possible to transmit the primal history of creation and the human race, from the mouth of Adam, to a period long after the Deluge, in an unadulterated form. Lamech, the father of Noah, was fifty-six years old when Adam died. Shem, the son of Noah, who was ninety-seven when the Flood set in, and who, therefore, had a full knowledge of the divine revelation given to Adam, lived contemporaneously with Abraham for 149 years, and 49 years with Isaac. Thus there was an uninterrupted transmission of divine revelation from Adam to the patriarchs of the Jewish race.

Historical Survey.

The following table gives the ages of the patriarchs from Adam to Jacob, together with the time in which they lived.

				Year since Creation of World.		
1. Adam	lived	930	years, from	1	to	930.
2. Seth	"	912	" "	130	"	1042.
3. Enos	"	905	" "	235	"	1140.
4. Cainan	"	910	" "	325	"	1235.
5. Mahalaleel	"	895	" "	395	"	1290.
6. Jared	"	962	" "	460	"	1422.

				Year since Creation of World.
7. Enoch	lived	365	years, from	622 to 987.
8. Methuselah	"	969	" "	687 " 1656.
9. Lamech	"	777	" "	874 " 1651.
10. Noah	"	950	" "	1056 " 2006.
11. Shem	"	600	" "	1558 " 2158.
12. Arphaxad	"	438	" "	1658 " 2096.
13. Salah	"	433	" "	1693 " 2126.
14. Eber	"	464	" "	1723 " 2187.
15. Peleg	"	239	" "	1757 " 1996.
16. Reu	"	239	" "	1787 " 2026.
17. Serug	"	230	" "	1819 " 2049.
18. Nahor	"	148	" "	1849 " 1997.
19. Terah	"	205	" "	1878 " 2083.
20. Abraham	"	175	" "	2008 " 2183.
21. Isaac	"	180	" "	2108 " 2288.
22. Jacob	"	147	" "	2168 " 2315.

Many of the old patriarchs before the Flood lived together at the same time and together taught and governed the Church of God.... They taught their children very diligently that they might be armed against the devil, sin, and the vicissitudes of life.... It was truly a Golden Age, those days when nine patriarchs lived together and in unity of the Spirit taught the people the promise of the Woman's Seed. — *Luther.*

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5. The Flood.

Gen 6–9

God's people, "the sons of God," the descendants of Seth, had for a long time kept themselves unspotted from the world, from the wicked Cainites. This is what God demands of His children. But gradually they began to have communion with "the children of men," and finally they even intermarried, taking wives "of all which they chose." They began to forget God. — The story of the Flood mirrors unto us God's holiness and justice, but also His long-suffering.

Cause of the Flood.

Year of the Flood: A. M. 1656.

The sons of God — The descendants of Seth, the sons of the holy patriarchs.

The daughters of men — The descendants of Cain, who had entirely fallen away from God.

That they were fair — The women of the world spend much time in trying to beautify and adorn their bodies, in practising the blandishments intended to arouse the desire of men.

They took them wives, etc. — They did not heed the good counsel and warning of their parents; their first concern was not to obtain pious spouses, but to gratify the desires of their sinful flesh.

Wickedness . . . was great—Result of such intermarriages: the "daughters of men" drew the "sons of God" ever farther away from God. Children not reared in the fear of God.

Every imagination evil continually — Since the Fall, man's heart is corrupt, sinful; and now that even those who had been reared by pious parents followed the promptings of their evil heart, there was no restraint against the rule of wickedness.

My Spirit shall not always strive with man — The Lord finally tired of the obstinacy of the people before the Flood, the wilful resistance shown the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel proclaimed to them.

He also is flesh — They yielded their members servants to the lusts of the flesh; they had become captives of the Evil One. (Cat., Qu. 258.)

I will destroy — The entire generation of men was frustrating the gracious design God had when He created man, and therefore He wanted to wipe it off from the face of the earth.

His days — God, however, granted the apostate race days, nay, years of grace, ample time to turn to Him in true repentance. — Whenever dire punishments were announced by the prophets and by Christ Himself, God always granted time for repentance: the Amorites (Gen. 15, 16), four hundred years; the Ninevites (Jonah 3, 4), forty days; Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4, 26), one year; the Jews who rejected their Messiah, forty years.

God Orders Noah to Build the Ark.

Grace — Noah was acceptable to God because he was "a just man," *i. e.*, because he believed in the promised Woman's Seed and therefore led a godly life ("walked with God"). See 2 Pet. 2, 5. (Cat., Qu. 227. 228.)

The end of all flesh — God announced to His "preacher of righteousness" that the long period of grace was nearing its end; the threatened punishment, a world catastrophe, must now come.

Filled with violence — The most heinous sins were committed; vice and crime were rampant; there was universal wickedness — unchecked.

Make thee an ark — Pious Noah and his family were not to be destroyed.

Ark of gopher-wood — "A large, floating vessel," now generally believed to have been built of a species of cypress, of a yellowish red color, fragrant, worm-proof, and of very great durability. The balsamic fragrance it exhales is both health-promoting and agreeable to the senses, and its solemn, stately appearance led to its being chosen as an emblem of mourning and sadness in Oriental countries, and hence was used to adorn tombs.

Rooms — A number of compartments; little cabins, in three tiers.

Pitch it with pitch — Native bitumen, mineral pitch, asphalt, to make the ark water-tight.

Cubits — A cubit is about 1½ feet; the distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger. — The ark was three stories high. It had only one window, and a door "in the side thereof."

Bring into the ark — All animals that cannot live in water. Of the clean animals — such as were allowed to be eaten and were used at the sacrifices — Noah was to take more than of "the beasts that are not clean."

All food — Note the kind providence of God. Neither Noah's family nor any animal in the ark was to suffer any want until the end of the Flood.

The Flood.

Shem = "Name." The eldest son of Noah. Besides the Jews (Abraham was a descendant of Shem) the Persians, Assyrians, and Arabians are descended from him. (Semitic languages.)

Ham = "Hot" or "Multitude." The youngest son of Noah. His descendants became the founders of large nations: Babylonians, Phenicians, Ethiopians, and Egyptians (to a large extent).

Japheth = "Enlargement." The second son of Noah. The Japhetic races have occupied "all the coast lands in Europe and Asia Minor and the islands of the Mediterranean, whence they spread northward over Europe and much of Asia, from India and Persia in the east to the extreme west of Europe, and now to America and Australia."

All kinds of animals went in — They followed the bidding of the Lord, who wished to preserve them.

The Lord shut him in — Noah could feel safe, while of the wicked race not one was able to enter the only place of refuge.

On the seventeenth day of the second month — As the first of the year, as reckoned then, was about the 22d of September, the Deluge began about the 7th of November, 1656, after the creation of the world.

Fountains of the great deep — All the fountains heretofore shut up inside the earth.

Windows of heaven — The water above the firmament gushed forth in torrents upon the surface of the earth.

Fifteen cubits — About 23 feet. Noah was able to tell this from the fact that the ark, which cut fifteen cubits of water, nowhere touched bottom when the Flood was at its height.

All flesh died — The entire race of man, excepting Noah and his family, and all animals that cannot live in water and were not in the ark with Noah.

End of the Flood.

God remembered Noah — He had not forgotten him whom He had "seen righteous in this generation." (Hymn 498, 5.)

Made a wind to pass over the earth — The wind scattered the clouds and caused the waters to evaporate.

The waters assuaged — Abated, receded, diminished.

Ararat — A mountain (16,969 feet high) in Armenia with two peaks, where the Euphrates and Tigris take their rise. (Map 1.)

A raven — Finding sufficient food (carcasses), it did not return to the ark.

Olive-leaf — As the olive-tree grows in bottoms and valleys, Noah could tell that the Flood had almost entirely subsided.

God's Covenant with Noah.

Removed the covering of the ark — In order gradually to get accustomed to the air and light, of which he had enjoyed but little during the days of the Flood.

God spake unto Noah — As Noah had entered the ark in obedience to the divine command, so he did not leave it again until God told him to do so. This was on the 17th day of November, 1657 (2343 B. C.). The Flood had lasted a year and ten days.

Builded an altar — The first altar mentioned in Holy Writ (*altus* = high). Generally built of stones.

Burnt offerings — The whole animal was consumed by fire in the burnt sacrifices — holocausts. It was to signify the yielding up of one's self to God with body and soul. In this case it was a thank-offering. (Second Commandment.)

Not again — Never again.

Curse — Destroy every living being on earth.

While the earth remaineth — Until Judgment Day. 2 Pet. 3, 7.

Be fruitful and multiply — God repeats here what He said to Adam. Noah is the second progenitor of the entire human race.

Covenant — A mutual agreement, or promise. (There must be at least two to make a covenant, or agreement.)

My bow—The rainbow, often seen after a rain, is a token of peace. It should always remind us of the divine promise given to Noah. Ezek. 1, 28; Rev. 4, 3.

The Sacrament of Baptism. — The Deluge was a type of the New Testament Baptism. 1 Pet. 3, 20. 21. As the waters of the Flood saved Noah and his family from destruction (while it brought death to all outside the ark), thus Baptism saves from sin and eternal perdition. Baptism is the ark that takes us to the haven of eternal bliss. (Cat., Qu. 284.)

Catechism: Close of the Commandments; First Commandment ("trust in God": Noah); First Article ("defends me against all danger," etc.).

Hymns: 381, 1. 2. 4—7; 48; 55; 525, 10; 372, 10.

Bible Readings: Ps. 65; 1 Thess. 5, 1—11; 2 Pet. 3, 3—14.

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6. The Curse of Canaan and the Tower of Babel.

Although everywhere, no doubt, vestiges of the Deluge could be seen for years to come, which reminded the beholder of the wrath of the holy God, and although, on the other hand, the Lord had shown such extraordinary grace and loving-kindness to Noah and his family, Holy Writ records the commission of a very great sin by a son and a grandson of Noah shortly after the Flood; and only little more than a century later the descendants of the "Preacher of Righteousness" had so completely forgotten the lesson of the Deluge that another dire punishment affecting the whole human race had to follow.

Ham's Sin.

Husbandman — Tiller of the soil; farmer.

Planted a vineyard — The first time mention is made in Holy Scriptures of the cultivation of the vine.

Drunken — No doubt he was not fully familiar with the effects of the fermented juice of the grape. — Note that the Bible does not fail to tell us of the sins of God's children.

Uncovered — Thereby giving offense.

Ham, Canaan's father— Canaan, Noah's grandson, seems to have been the first one who saw his grandfather in this condition and, in telling his father about it, to have made disrespectful remarks regarding it. (Cat., Qu. 86.) And Ham "mocked at his father" (Prov. 30, 17) and despised him. (Fourth Commandment.)

Shem and Japheth — They literally "covered the sin" (1 Pet. 4, 8) of their parent. They were so chaste and loved their father so much that they did not even want to see the sorry sight he presented to passers-by.

The Curse and the Blessing.

Noah awoke . . . knew — Very likely he asked who and why some one had spread a cover over him and in this way heard of the whole affair. He repented of his sin and asked for, and received forgiveness.

His younger son — Ham was the youngest of Noah's three sons.

Cursed be Canaan — Being God's prophet, Noah uttered both the curse and the blessings in the name of the Lord. — Canaan is mentioned because he followed in the footsteps of his father.

A servant of servants — Ham's descendants became the slaves first of the descendants of Shem (of the Arabians and the children of Israel, — and most of the Canaanitish people were annihilated in the days of Joshua) and later of the descendants of Japheth, in Africa. From Africa they were brought to this country in the early days of its settlement by Europeans (Japhetites) and were kept as slaves, especially in the Southern States, until 1863 (1865). — Though afflicted with a temporal curse, they were not thereby shut out from heaven. Christ died also for this race. (Cat., Qu. 158.) The Gospel is also meant for them. Ps. 68, 31; 87, 4. (Our Colored Missions.)

Blessed be . . . Shem — "Salvation is of the Jews," Jesus said to the woman of Samaria. John 4, 22. The Redeemer was to be a descendant of Shem.

God shall enlarge Japheth — Japheth's descendants, espe-

cially the nations of Europe, "have had the destinies of the world in their hands, under God."

Dwell in the tents of Shem — Share in the spiritual blessings promised particularly to Shem (Israel).

As soon as men multiplied after the Flood, sin also grew apace. A particularly palpable sin was pride. "Pride cometh before a fall."

The Building of the Tower.

The people were divided in the earth — From Mount Ararat the descendants of Noah began to spread out in all directions. The Shemites (Semites) gradually peopled Anterior Asia and Asia Minor; the Japhetic nations, Northern Asia and Europe; the Hamites, Africa and Southern Asia. (Map 1. Distribution of nations after the Flood: the descendants of Shem, Ham [Canaan], and Japheth.)

Of one language — What a great boon that was we can very well imagine, especially in this our land of many languages.

Plain — "The land of Shinar," the luxuriously productive Babylonian Plain between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. (Map 1.)

Build us a city and a tower — A threefold sinful purpose is evident here: 1) "Let us make us a name" — vainglory. (See First Petition and Hymn 261: "All glory be to God on high." See also 1 Cor. 1, 31.) 2) The top of the tower should "reach unto heaven" — pride. 3) "Lest we be scattered abroad," etc. — bidding defiance to God, who had said: "Fill the earth."

Burnt brick — Instead of the usual sun-dried brick.

The Confusion of Tongues.

The Lord said — Words spoken in the council of the Holy Trinity.

Nothing will be restrained from them — One language together with unity of purpose made them strong.

Confound [confuse] *their language* — A divine punitive miracle. No one understood what anybody else wanted. This punishment reaches down to the present time. Not one people understands the other's language without learning it at great expense of time and labor.

Scattered them abroad — Just what they had intended to prevent. (Make use of the picture.)

Babel — Means confusion. (Map 1.)

Luke 1, 51 — The history of the various peoples shows the truth of this passage. Where is the haughty Pharaoh, proud Nebuchadnezzar? _____

Catechism: Fourth Commandment. — First Commandment; First and Third Petitions.

Hymns: 391, 5. — 341, 4—6; 344, 6.

Bible Readings: Is. 19, 18—25. — Luke 21, 5—24; Acts 2, 1—13; Rom. 1, 18—25.

Annotational Matter.

"Pride caused the confusion of tongues; Christ's humility has reunited them. What the Tower of Babel scattered the Church of Christ has gathered again. Many languages grew out of one; do not marvel, — selfishness did it. Many languages were made one; do not marvel, — Love did it. May there be ever so manifold a sound of languages, in the hearts of believers (of all the various nations) but *one* Spirit is called upon in prayer." (*Augustine.*)

The Patriarchs.

(2000—1500 B. C.)

From the ancestral tree of *Shem* a branch (Abraham) is taken and transplanted into a different soil (Canaan), and there grows to a large tree with twelve mighty branches (twelve sons of Jacob). God's purpose in doing this was to separate His chosen generation from the side-line of the common ancestor (Shem), *i. e.*, from the Moabites, Amorites, Ishmaelites, Edomites, etc. It is the age of Israel's infancy as a people. In building up His kingdom on earth, God begins in a manner that, to man, seems very unpretentious and even entirely unpromising. (Map 4.)

Besides the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this epoch also contains the history of the *sons of Jacob*, particularly *Joseph*. Though the latter was not to be the transmitter of the promise given after the Fall, he was destined by God to be instrumental in transplanting Jacob's family to Egypt. He is trained by God for this important mission much in the same way as the direct ancestors of the promised Redeemer of mankind.

Heb. 7, 4, Abraham is called "the *patriarch*." Acts 7, 8 f., the name of patriarch is given also to Jacob's sons. Acts 2, 29, the same designation is applied to David. Patriarch, therefore, simply means a forefather, or grandsire, of God's covenant people. Generally, however, we call only Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob patriarchs.

7a. The Promised Land.

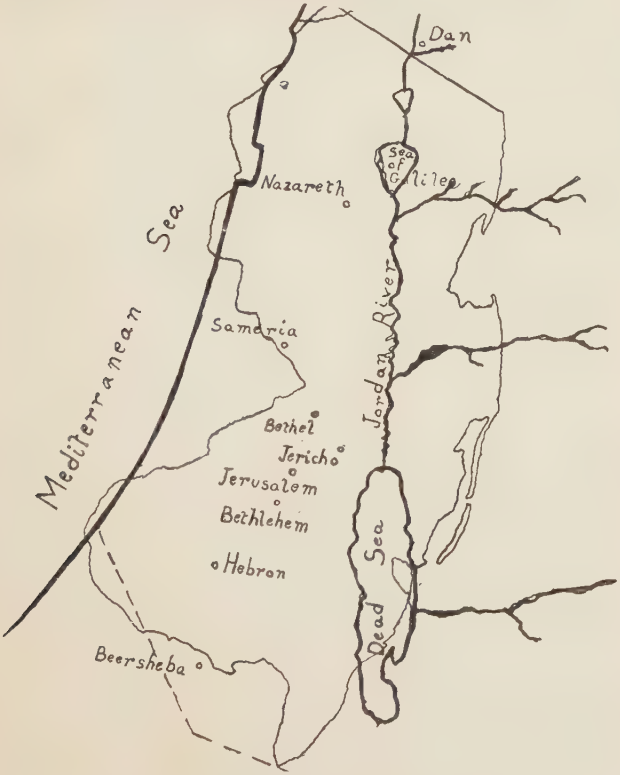
Various Names Given to That Country.

Canaan, according to some authorities, means a lowland, while others derive the name from the fourth son of Ham, to whom that name was given. *Palestine* originally meant land of the *Philistines*. It was called *The Holy Land* because it was the scene of "the wonderful works of God" for Israel's benefit; *Promised Land*, because it was promised to Abraham and his seed; *Land of the Hebrews*, from Eber, a grandsire of Abraham (Gen. 10, 21. 24; 11, 14—17); *Land of Israel*, because Israel dwelt in it; similarly, *Land of the Jews*, because the Jews lived there; the *land in which milk and honey flows*, from the fact of its having been such a wonderfully fertile country. At the present day the designations *Palestine* and *Holy Land* are almost exclusively used.

Geographical Boundaries; Size.

The Holy Land of the Israelites was situated between 52 and 54½° longitude east of Greenwich and 31 and 33½° latitude north, both east and west of the river Jordan, the extreme length from north to south being 130 miles and the width, in the central part, 60 miles. The entire area was about 12,000 square miles, about the size of the two States of Massachusetts and Connecticut. It was bounded on the north by Phenicia and Syria (Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon), on the east by the Syro-Arabian Desert, on the south by Arabia Petraea (Northwestern Arabia, with the Sinaitic Peninsula), and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. The boundaries, however, were not always the same. The country was about in the center of the three then known con-

tinents, but, in consequence of its island-like position, it was, similarly to the people, closed against the surrounding countries. Owing to the physical conditions of the country, it was, to a great extent, immune against influences from without, while, at the same time, being situated between Egypt and the Asiatic world



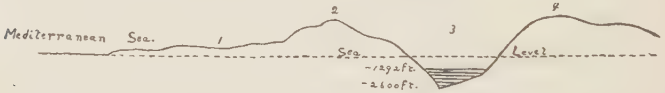
New Jersey and Palestine.
Drawn to Same Scale.

empires, and so near to the great commercial centers of Phenicia, as well as to the highroads of commerce, it constituted the center of the radius of world activity. In this way it was singularly fit to be the quiet and secluded nursery of God's kingdom, and the great center from which, after the work of redemption had been accomplished, the Gospel of Christ could be spread among all nations of the earth.

Physical Features.

Palestine is a mountainous country throughout. Two mountain plateaus stretch along the entire country from the Lebanon in the north to Arabia Petraea in the south. Thus four parallel strips, as it were, are formed: the Ocean Plain, the West Jordan Plateau, the Jordan Plain, and the East Jordan Plateau.

1. The *Ocean Plain* is interrupted in the north by Mount Carmel, to the north and east of which are the plains of Accho, Zebulun, and Jezreel. The last-named plain, about three miles long and three to five miles wide, is very fertile. Many battles were fought here. South of Mount Carmel are the plains of Sharon and Shephela. From the Carmel promontory to Jaffa (Japho, Joppa) the former is thirty-nine miles long and nine to fifteen miles wide and very fertile, but lying waste now. The latter reaches from Jaffa to Gaza and is sixty miles long. In olden times it was well settled and cultivated. It is a well-watered region, the home of the Philistines.



Physical Divisions of Palestine.

2. The *West Jordan Plateau* has three principal mountain ranges. To the north there are the Naphtali Mountains, including, *e. g.*, Mount Tabor and the Mount of the Beatitudes. — In the center we have the Ephraim Mountains, between Mount Carmel and Bethel, about forty-five miles wide and reaching an altitude of about 3,000 feet. Mount Carmel, Mount Gilboa (east of the Plain of Jezreel), nearly 1,750 feet high, Mount Ebal and south of it Gerizim, both almost 3,000 feet, belong to that range. — The Mountains of Judah stretch along the southern part of the country, from the Dead Sea to the Plain of Shephela. A road leads from Bethel to Jerusalem and Hebron over this mountain range. The summits are bald and sterile, while the valleys are productive. Mounts Zion, Moriah, Bezeth, and Acra, within the boundaries of Jerusalem, are included in this mountain range. East of Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. The Mount of the Evil Counsel, the name of which is derived from the evil counsel held in Caiaphas's palace, said to have been built upon it, is an elevation south of Jerusalem. The Mount of the Amorites is the name given in Scripture to the southern spur of the Mountains of Judah. Deut. 1, 7. 19. 20.

3. The *Jordan River* is formed by the confluence of three mountain springs from Anti-Lebanon, and, after a course of 27 miles, during which several tributary streams have added to its volume of water, empties into Lake Merom. South of this lake the Jordan Valley is below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, being as much as 1,292 feet below at the Dead Sea. From the Lake of Gennesaret (Sea of Galilee) to the Dead Sea is a stretch of only 65 miles, but because of its winding propensities, which also cause it to cover an area of from two to eight miles in width, its waters travel a distance of about 200 miles to its mouth. Owing to the numerous fords, cliffs, whirlpools, and waterfalls the Jordan is not navigable. Between Lake Gennesaret and the Dead Sea there are 27 larger and innumerable little waterfalls. The Plain of Jordan, from Lake Gennesaret southward, is called Ghor (depression of the ground). In summer it appears barren and waste; in spring the ground is covered with verdant vegetation. Tributaries of Jordan: to the left, Hieromar (Yarmuk), Jabbok, and Heshbon; to the right, Brook Cherith (*pron.* kerith). "Many of the so-called 'rivers' of Palestine are only winter-torrents, whose beds are dry in summer."

4. The *eastern plateau* (Perea) is more monotonous than that of the Jordan. Extensive oak forests alternate with rich pastures. The table-land to the north is called Bashan (famous for oaks and wild bulls). South of the Yarmuk are the Mountains of Gilead, intersected by the river Jabbok. The table-land of Gilead gradually becomes an extensive plain across from Jericho, called the Plains of Moab, and frowning over them are the Abarim Mountains. The river Arnon, rising in these mountains, forms the boundary line of the Holy Land from this side.

Climatic Conditions.

The *climate* of Palestine, on the whole, is mild, inclining, however, toward the extreme of heat rather than to that of cold. The country is in the southern portion of the north temperate zone. Owing to its proximity to the ocean (cool breezes from the west) and to the hills and mountains round about, the heat is not as excessive as it otherwise would be. The greatest heat is found in the Jordan Valley, especially near the Dead Sea.

There are really *only two seasons*, a cold and a warm season. The former, also called the rainy season, begins about the middle of October or in the beginning of November. As the Jews began their new year in September, the rain falling during this season was called the former rain. It puts the soil in proper condition

for the reception of the winter crop sown at this time of the year. Beginning with the month of December, the rainfall grows heavier, and raw and colder weather sets in. Sometimes it even snows, but the snow soon melts. Spring might be said to begin in February; but it continues to rain by spells until the end of March. This is called the latter rain. By the middle of April or beginning of May the barley harvest begins. The summer crop, the seed of which is sown during the time of the latter rain, and which during the months of growth is refreshed only by the dew falling of a cool night (which was so heavy as to be called "small rain," Deut. 29, 2), is garnered in September or October. Also the fruit-crop is gathered at this time of the year.

Products.

Of the *mineral kingdom:* Salts, sulphur, rock oil (petroleum), limestone, basalt, tile- or brick-clay, asphalt, and iron.

Of the *vegetable kingdom:* Cedar, oak, terebinth (turpentine-tree), box-tree, olive, myrtle, carob-tree (St. John's bread), cypress, almond, fig-tree, date-palm, mulberry-tree; grapes, oranges, melons; wheat, barley.

Of the *animal kingdom:* Cattle, sheep, goats, camels, horses, mules, donkeys; lions, bears, hyenas, foxes, wolves; snakes, scorpions; fish; bees.

Of *scourges* with which the country was visited we may mention drouth, hot, scorching winds, locusts, and earthquakes.

Original Inhabitants.

At the time of the patriarchs, Canaan comprised only the West Jordan country, including Tyre and Sidon. The inhabitants, called Canaanites, were heathen. There were eleven tribes, five of which lived in those sections which the Lord had determined to give to His people. 1) The *Hittites* on the Mountains of Judah. Their capital city was Hebron. Abraham purchased his family vault in this part of the country. 2) The *Jebusites*, living in and near Jebus, later called Jerusalem. David fully conquered them. 3) The *Amorites*. At the time of Abraham they lived near Hebron and on the southern slopes of the Mountains of Judah, in consequence of which the southern extremity of this mountain range was called Mountains of the Amorites. Later they broke into the country across the Jordan and took possession of the lands of the Ammonites and Moabites. 4) The *Hivites*. They were scattered in small groups in the northern and central parts of the country. 5) The *Girgashites*, a rather insignificant tribe in the northern section. — The nation that was called the *Canaan-*

ites in the strictest sense of the term, and the *Perizzites*, lived partly on the coast plains, partly in the northern regions. — The population of the Holy Land before the time of the kings was about two million, during the reign of David and Solomon about five million. At the time of Christ it had decreased again to about two million, and to-day the figures run still lower. The country was most densely settled round about Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee and rather sparsely east of the Jordan. — In the days of Abraham nomadic tribes with their herds roamed about the country. There were but few cities, and these, no doubt, were of little importance, such as Shechem, Luz, and Hebron. The tribal chiefs called kings in the Bible, frequently waged war against one another. Later (see Josh. 31) we read of 31 and (Judg. 1) even of 70 "kings" of Canaanitish tribes.

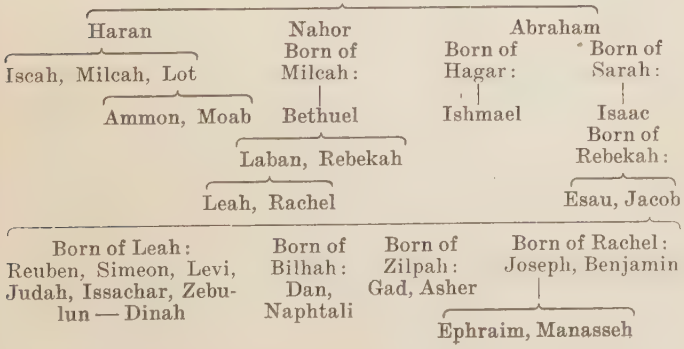
7b. The Call of Abraham. Gen. 12-14

The descendants of Noah fell away from God in rapidly increasing numbers. The Lord now chose a man, "according to His own purpose and grace" (2 Tim. 1, 9), who was to be the bearer of the message of that great and glorious salvation which He had intended for all men — the Gospel of the promised Redeemer of mankind.

Abraham's Ancestors.

From Shem to Abraham there were ten generations. Since the Flood 426 years had elapsed — 1918 B. C.

The Genealogy of Abraham.



Ur of the Chaldees — In Mesopotamia (Acts 7, 2), probably in the northern section, near the sources of the river Tigris, called "the richest country of Asia."

Terah served other gods — Josh. 24, 3. Ur is supposed to have been the seat of the worship of the moon god. So soon after the Deluge, a little less than three hundred years, the whole world had forgotten that awful divine judgment and was steeped in idolatry.

Get thee out of thy country — Abram had lived in Haran, where his father had gone from Ur of the Chaldees. Haran was a region in Northwestern Mesopotamia. Though watercourses did not abound, it was, nevertheless, a fertile country. (Map 4.) — Not by his own reason or strength did Abram turn from the worship of idols to faith in the true God and the promised Messiah; it was *God* who called him out of spiritual darkness to His marvelous light. (Cat., Qu. 174—178.)

Annotational Matter.

Excavations made in the country where Abraham passed his early life give us *a glimpse of the life of those days.* A house was found in a fairly perfect state of preservation. It was square, with mud walls, one story high, and with a flat roof. There was only one room, dark; light entered only by the doorway. The floor was the hard ground, perhaps once covered by reed mats. The people ate and slept upon the ground. A few jars of water, a hollow stone for pounding the grain, a few bronze implements, and mats were the only furnishings. — Numberless clay tablets and seals were found, as well as clay "schoolbooks" and multiplication tables. There are plain evidences that "men were able to write down their thoughts and deeds in intelligible language and permanent form." (*Sayce.*) — "The distinguishing character of this civilization [in the days of Abraham] is its high degree of art and craftsmanship. This is exactly what the Bible leads us to expect. . . . The postdiluvians inherited antediluvian civilization and had around them remains of antediluvian structures." (*Melvin Grove Kyle.*)

The Calling of Abram.

In calling Abram, the Lord demanded a threefold self-denial of him: —

Get thee out of thy country — Where he had lived hitherto.

From thy kindred — He had to separate from all his kinsmen, or relatives.

From thy father's house — He was obliged to leave even his father and mother — his own family. — Leave all that are near and dear to you. Each new demand was more difficult than the preceding one.

That I will show thee — "He went out, not knowing whither he went." Heb. 11, 8. "By faith" he did so; for it required a strong faith indeed to obey this command of the Lord.

But the Lord made it easier to follow these demands by giving glorious promises: —

I will make of thee a great nation — Thou shalt become the ancestor of a great nation — people of Israel.

I will bless thee — It shall be well unto thee; thou shalt prosper.

I will make thy name great — make thee famous.

In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed — The Savior of the world shall be born of thy descendants. John 8, 56.

All families — All nations of the earth. See Matt. 8, 11. Also our nation.

Abram — Sarai — Abram: "Exalted Father." Sarai: "My Princess."

Lot — Like his uncle Abram he abandoned idolatry and turned to the service of the living God.

Plain of Moreh — Or "Oaks of Moreh," near Shechem, 34 miles north of Jerusalem.

Unto thy seed, etc. — Thy descendants. An additional great promise.

Builded he an altar — Publicly worshiped the true God; confessed Him without fear amidst the heathen Canaanites.— Missionary spirit. (Third Commandment. Cat., Qu. 28. Hymn 64, 1.)

ABRAM AND LOT.

Abram was very rich — God had blessed him according to His promise.

Land not able to bear them — Not enough food particularly for the large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

Strife — Ceaseless wrangling, disputing.

Let there be no, etc. — Abram was the peacemaker. Matt. 5, 9. A beautiful appeal.

We be brethren — Lot was Abram's nephew. In the Bible near relatives were often called brothers.

I will go, etc. — Willing to yield his right, although he was the superior. Wholly unselfish.

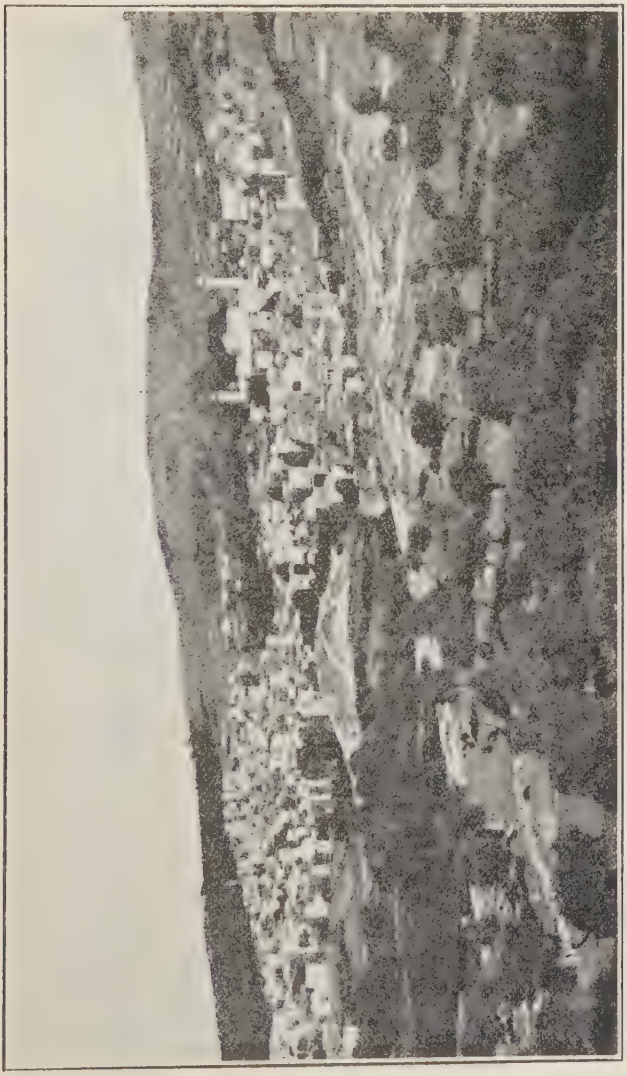
Lot chose him, etc. — A selfish and a worldly choice. "He chose worldly advantage without regard to spiritual things." (See map — Sodom.)

Pitched his tent — For himself and his numerous servants. The patriarchs were nomads, herdsmen, wandering with their herds and flocks from place to place.

All the land — This renewal of the divine promise strengthened Abram's faith.

Plain of Mamre — Called thus after an Amorite chief; see Gen. 14, 13. 24. Abram went there in obedience to a word of the Lord. In the new home his first concern again was divine worship.

Hebron — An ancient town of Palestine, one of the oldest towns in the world, mentioned earlier than Damascus. It is about twenty miles south of Jerusalem and the same distance north of Beersheba. It is mentioned about forty times in the Old Testament, but nowhere in the New Testament. During the conquest of Canaan it was taken by Joshua; was made a Levitical city and a city of refuge; was the royal residence of David for seven years. It lies in a narrow part of a valley and is surrounded by fertile lands. At the present day it has about 10,000 inhabitants. (Map 5.)



Hebron.

THE BATTLE.

Made war — This is the first war of which we have any record in the Bible.

Four kings . . . king of Sodom — (Map.) The king of Sodom and four other kings of the country round about Sodom — these "kings" were in reality merely chiefs of small tribes or rulers of towns with some adjacent territory — had been subject to four confederated "kings" of certain territories farther north, but had rebelled against them. Result: Defeat; robbed of all their goods and victuals.

Took Lot also — A wholesome chastisement for having chosen a new home without regard to his soul's welfare and that of his family.

Abram . . . smote the enemy — Although Lot, his nephew, had not treated him as he should have done, he requited good for evil. Brotherly love born of faith. (Cat., Qu. 48; "forgiving.") — Great courage shown in attacking a large army with only 318 men (his slaves). God was with him, and therefore he was able to rout the enemy and rescue Lot.

CATECHISM: First and Fifth Commandments.

HYMNS: 366, 1; 197, 7.

BIBLE READINGS: Heb. 11, 8—10; 1 Cor. 13.

Annotational Matter.

The patriarchs were *shepherd-folk*. Abraham was a rich, independent shepherd, or herdsman, such as the emirs in Arabia, Syria, and Palestine to-day. Their herds were composed chiefly of sheep; but they also had cattle and goats. Camels and donkeys were their beasts of burden and were also used for riding purposes. The "deserts" or "wildernesses" we read of in the Bible were uninhabited stretches of land, frequently affording rich pasture for sheep, etc. Sometimes little towns were to be found in these "deserts." On these free pasturages the shepherds would feed their flocks, going from one place to another, but always along certain highways. Such is the custom to this day. In summer the shepherds drive their flocks up the mountain slopes, those in Canaan toward the Lebanon, whose peaks are perpetually covered with snow; when the cold season comes on, first to the

lower table-lands and finally to the low plains in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. (Map 5.) — Their *tents* are either of a roundish shape, resting on an eight- to ten-foot pole placed in the center, or oblong, with seven or nine poles supporting them, three of which are higher than the rest, the one in the middle of the tent being the highest. The cover is made of goat's or camel's hair. When stretched taut, the tent is water-proof. Inside, a curtain is stretched across the tent, which divides it into two apartments, so that the women can be separated from the men. Mostly, however, they have more than two apartments, which gives them a stall for the cattle. Rich emirs of our day have separate tents for the women and for their cattle. (Abraham does not seem to have had this arrangement at first, Gen. 18, 9; but later on he had a separate tent for his wife and her maids, as we glean from Gen. 24, 67.) Round about the tent of the rich shepherd chief a row of smaller tents is pitched, which can be taken up in two hours. — Where there are no brooks or streams, a *cistern* or *well* is dug, which is regarded by those who dug it as their property. These wells have only a small opening at the surface and hence can easily be covered with a big flat stone. Not infrequently a dispute arises regarding the use or ownership of such wells; see Gen. 21, 25; 26, 15 ff. The tents may often be found under a big shady tree.

This gives us an idea of how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in the land of Canaan.

8. Abraham's Faith.

The Lord had promised Abram a child, a son, who was to be the ancestor of the "Blessing of Nations" — the Messiah. But time wore on, he was getting old, and still there was no issue. However, he nobly stood the test, particularly after the Lord had renewed His promise. "He was strong in faith, giving glory to God." Rom. 4, 20.

God's Renewed Promise.

Thy Shield — Thy Protector. A soldier in those days who was provided with a large shield felt safe in battle.

Thy exceeding great Reward — Since thou art willing to waive all claims to any other reward, I give Myself unto thee, the unspeakable riches of My grace.

I go childless - Abraham reminds God of the promise He had given him. — In Old Testament times it was considered a curse and a shame to have no children. All the greater was the trial for Abraham, who had received the promise that the Messiah would be born of his progeny.

So shall thy seed be — God gives him a visible sign of His promise.

He believed in the Lord — Put his trust solely in the divine word of promise. Gal. 3, 16. His was a strong and firm faith. To this day we call him the "father of all them that believe." Rom. 4, 11. (Cat., Qu. 107: "firm confidence," etc., 2 Tim. 1, 12.)

Counted . . . righteousness — He was justified in the sight of God, not by works, but by faith in the promised Savior. The same way of salvation in the Old and in the New Testament.

God's Covenant with Abraham.

Ninety-nine years old — And still childless! Twenty-four years after he had received the first promise. (See p. 13 of *Bible History.*)

Almighty God — With God nothing is impossible. He is able to fulfil all His promises.

Walk before Me — Walk in faith in the promised Savior, my dear Son. (Cat., Qu. 16.)

Be thou perfect — Faith in the promised Savior made him perfect in the sight of God, "without spot or wrinkle," "holy and without blemish." Now he should give evidence of the justifying faith that was in him by walking in "righteousness and true holiness," and "abounding more and more."

Fell on his face - Prostrated himself to the ground in reverent worship, humbly thankful for the renewed promise.

Abraham — "Father of a multitude," father of nations. The new name (outward sign) was to strengthen his faith.

My covenant — A covenant is a mutual agreement between two persons (or more) to do, or refrain from doing, certain

things which have been expressly stipulated. — This covenant was the *Sacrament of Circumcision,* a type of the Sacrament of Baptism, the seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. 4, 11, as Holy Baptism is the seal of the forgiveness of sin (righteousness) promised in the Gospel and appropriated by faith. (Cat., Qu. 269.) — This covenant of Circumcision was to be observed by the Old Testament people of God until replaced by the corresponding Sacrament of the New Testament.

Sarah = "Princess." No longer Sarai = "*My* (Abraham's) Princess," but a princess of nations of men, "mother of nations," even kings; above all, however, the ancestress of Jesus Christ.

The Lord Visits Abraham.

In the tent door — Most likely, under a shady tree in front of the tent, at midday ("in the heat of the day").

He lifted up his eyes — Looking down the road.

Three men — One was the Son of God, who had, for this occasion, assumed the form of man ("Angel of the Lord"). The other two were angels.

Ran to meet them — Hospitable; very willing to "entertain strangers." Heb. 13, 2. Certainly a lesson for us.

Bowed himself toward the ground — Before the one who seemed to be a man of rank. It was customary in the countries of the Orient to do reverence to a prince or king by prostrating oneself before him, the face even touching the ground ("falling upon one's face"; "cleaving unto the ground").

Pass not away — He actually begged them to be his guests.

Wash your feet — Washing the feet of the guests was the first act of hospitality shown a person after he had entered the house. As only sandals were worn (made of a hard, thick piece of ox-hide, fastened to the foot by strips of sheepskin or goatskin, called latchets in the New Testament), the feet of guests, dust-covered, needed a washing. — Water, as a rule, is scarce in Oriental countries.

Comfort your hearts — To "comfort" here means to "bring vigor to the spirits," to refresh them, by partaking of the meal that Abraham promised his guests.

Abraham hastened — He was extremely delighted at being visited by such distinguished guests.

Three measures — About three pecks.

Fine meal — Choice flour.

Butter . . . milk . . . calf — A generous host; and he gave the best he had ("tender and good" calf).

Stood by them — Did not deem himself worthy to eat with them.

Where is Sarah? — The omniscient Son of God, of course, knew where she was.

Certainly return — This divine word of assurance was intended to give Abraham the needed certainty of the fulfilment of the promise.

A year hence — Formerly the promise had always been indefinite as to time. Now: Only one more year!

Into the tent — According to Oriental custom the wife does not show her face when her husband has visitors.

Cakes — Thin, round, unleavened cakes, or wafers, baked on hot, flattened stones and quickly prepared. They were favorites with the people then and are so to this day.

Laughed within herself — She doubted — would not believe the Lord's promise.

I laughed not — She dreaded to admit it in the presence of the Lord; a sin of weakness.

She was afraid — Because she had come to a knowledge of her sin.

Thou didst laugh — He convicted her of her falsehood. — She repented and received forgiveness. Heb. 11, 11 ("faith").

Catechism: First Article. — Circumcision — Baptism.

Hymns: 525, 2. 8; 507, 1. 6; 494, 1. 2.

Bible Readings: Rom. 4, 1—25; Gal. 3, 1—14.

9. Sodom and Gomorrah.

The Lord had appeared to Abraham in company with two angels and had assured him that He would give him a son. When they left him, Abraham accompanied them a short way. Then the Lord revealed to him what He intended to do with Sodom. Abraham there proved himself a man of prayer. Most earnestly and humbly did he entreat the Lord to spare Sodom. And he was confident that the Lord would hear his prayer.

Abraham's Intercession.

The three men — The Son of God and the two angels left the tent-dwelling of Abraham.

Toward Sodom — East of Hebron. (Map.)

Cry of Sodom . . . very grievous — Their sins cried to heaven; they provoked the holy God so grievously that He could no longer defer the punishment. — Having honored Abraham above all men of his time by selecting him as the ancestor of the Messiah, the Lord treated him, as it were, as His *confidant,* as a friend to whom He confided one of His "state secrets."

Abraham stood — This gracious condescension made Abraham bold to come forward with a petition which — except to the eye of faith — seems audacious. But it pleased the Lord. See Luke 18, 5 ("troubleth me — weary me") — 7. (Cat., Qu. 220: "with all boldness and confidence"; Rom. 8, 15.) His intercessory prayer is a model prayer. — Mark his love of Lot.

I will spare — "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Jas. 5, 16. — How willing God is to withdraw His punishing hand and to forgive if the sinner will but turn from his evil ways! He wants all men to be saved. (Cat., Qu. 158; 183; Ezek. 33, 11; 1 Pet. 3, 9.)

Fifty . . . ten — For the sake of a small number of true children of God the Lord often continues to be long-suffering toward an otherwise wicked community. What a loving and merciful God!

Taken upon me — I have ventured, dared, to ask such great things of Thee.

Dust and ashes — Note his humility. (Cat., Qu. 319: "poor, miserable sinner.")

The Angels at Sodom.

The Lord [the Son of God] *went His way* — He had patiently listened to His friend Abraham until he had ended his intercessory prayer.

Lot sat in the gate — The gate of the city generally was an arched entrance, with wide niches, on either side of which were a number of seats. The men were wont to meet there not only for a social talk, but also to transact business (see Ruth 4, 1ff.), and the judges held their court trials there.

Rose up to meet them — Lot, like his uncle Abraham, was a very hospitable man and also thus "entertained angels unawares." Heb. 13, 2.

Old and young — Even the children and the young people of the city delighted in wickedness. Ezek. 16, 48—50.

Bring them out unto us — They wanted to commit shameful deeds against them.

I pray you, brethren — Notwithstanding the fact that the inhabitants of Sodom "vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" and with their "filthy conversation," Lot remained "just," a child of God (2 Pet. 2, 7. 8) and tried to turn them from their evil ways.

Come in to sojourn — You are not a member of our nation, not a real citizen — only a stranger.

Judge — Act as if they were subject to him, the stranger!

Pressed sore upon Lot — They wanted to lay hands on him. "Sore" = violently.

Smote the men . . . with blindness — God did a miracle; they saw other objects well enough, but they were utterly unable to find Lot's door. (Comp. 2 Kings 6, 18ff. — Cat. Qu. 103: "defends me . . . all evil.")

Lot is Saved.

Any besides — Any relative; any one near and dear to thee?

Place — The entire region of this "garden of God," comprising five cities.

Sons-in-law — Betrothed to his daughters; nevertheless called "sons-in-law." Betrothed persons are joined together as man and wife in the sight of God. (Cat., Qu. 51: "entered into by rightful betrothal.")

As one that mocked — His sons-in-law, wicked men, thought Lot was taking them for fools.

He lingered — Was undecided what to do, could not make up his mind at once to leave everything behind. Weakness of faith.

The angels . . . brought them forth — "Are they [the angels] not all ministering spirits . . . heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1, 14.

Without — Outside the limits of the city.

Escape for thy life — Save thy life. Abraham's intercessory plea had not been made in vain.

Escape to the mountain — The mountain country east of the Dead Sea; probably the Amarim Mountains. (Maps 3 and 8.)

I cannot . . . lest some evil take me — He had a dread of the mountains although the Lord had told him to go there, which implied the promise that He would protect him, sustain him, and sufficiently provide for him there. He was, unlike his uncle Abraham, a man of little faith in the day of trouble and distress.

Zoar — Formerly called Bela. Gen. 14, 2. 8. The exact location of Zoar is in doubt. (Maps 3 and 8, northeast of the Dead Sea.)

Destruction of the Cities.

The Lord — The Son of God.

From the Lord — God the Father.

Brimstone and fire — Burning sulphur.

Overthrew those cities. Destroyed them entirely "in a moment" (Lam. 4, 6), laid them waste, razed them to the ground; "turned them to ashes." 2 Pet. 2, 6. — The burning sulphur ignited the mineral pitch mines found there. (See Gen. 14, 10: "slime-pits.")

Pillar of salt. — The lust of the world (1 John 2, 17) had taken such a strong hold of her heart that she was loath to part with it. The Lord punished her immediately upon her looking back. She became, she was turned into, a pillar of salt. Luke 17, 32 f. — This pillar is mentioned by a number of writers. Josephus (in *Antiquities*, I, 11. 4) claimed that it still remained in his day, and that he had seen it. Clemens Romanus, Irenaeus, and Benjamin of Tudela also wrote of the strange formation as visible in their day; but later writers stated that it had ceased to exist.

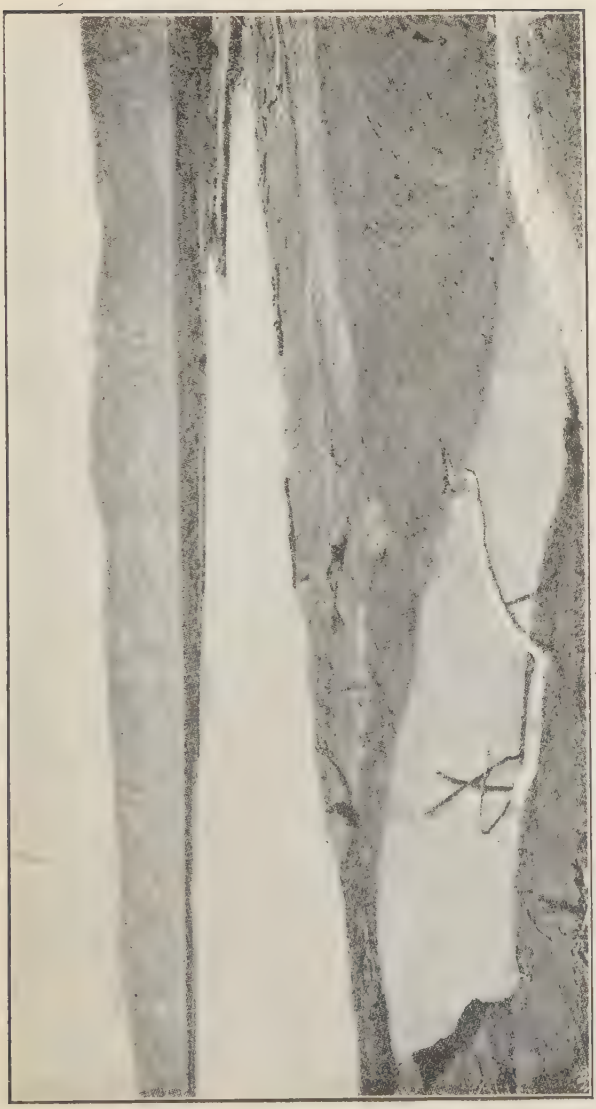
Catechism: Angels; Qu. 114. — Qu. 82—87.

Hymns: 23, 4; 48, 1; 55; 372, 5; 62, 9; 136, 10; 553; 554, 6.

Bible Readings: Jer. 8, 21—9, 21; Luke 18, 1—8; Gal. 5, 16—24.

Annotational Matter.

The *Dead Sea* is 46 miles long, and has a maximum width of 10 miles, the minimum being 2 miles. Steep walls of rock enclose it on all sides. Its surface is 1,300 feet below that of the Mediterranean Sea. The water is bitter and heavily charged with salt (28 per cent.). No animal can live in it. Fish drifting into the lake from the Jordan die at once and float on the surface. On its shores no tree or even shrub is seen. Sulphur is found on the shores, asphalt may be seen floating on its waters, and salt is mixed with the soil round about. The greatest depth is 1,300 feet; at the southern end, however, barely 20 feet. The lake has no outlet; but evaporation occurs at such an enormous rate that the lake rather decreases than otherwise. What is now the southern part of the lake was the site of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar. Deut. 29, 23. Three rivers empty their waters into the Dead Sea: the Arnon from the east, the Jordan from the north, and the Kedron from the west. — In the New Testament no mention whatever is made of the Dead Sea. But



The Dead Sea.

recent excavations made at the Dead Sea corroborate the account of Gen. 19. Excavators have found what is beyond dispute the site of Sodom and Gomorrah and even the pillar of salt, mingled with clay and brimstone. Pottery dating from the twentieth century B. C., the century in which Abraham lived, has been unearthed. — In the Bible the Dead Sea is called the Sea of the Plain, Deut. 4, 49; the Salt Sea, Deut. 3, 17; the East Sea (to distinguish it from the Mediterranean Sea in the west), Joel 2, 20; the Vale of Siddim, Gen. 14, 2. (Maps 3, 5, 8.)

Zoar, no doubt, was situated on the peninsula dividing the sea into two unequal halves. It looks like a spot that has been spared in a great upheaval round about. As the Jordan could not discharge its waters into the Red Sea, the latter having a higher elevation than the Jordan, it would seem to suggest itself that the northern half of the Dead Sea existed before that dreadful catastrophe, while the southern half, with its shallow basin, covers the site of those four wicked cities destroyed by the hand of God.

10. The Offering of Isaac.

The Lord faithfully keeps His promise. Abraham finally obtained what he longed for so long. A son was born to him. — But the Lord tried his faith once more. He was to show whether he loved his son more than God. Since we last heard of him, he had removed from Hebron to Beersheba. (Map 3.)

Isaac Born and Circumcised.

God had spoken to him — "All His works are done in truth." Ps. 33, 4. — A year after the destruction of Sodom.

The name of his son Isaac — Meaning of word: laughter. "God hath made me to laugh," Sarah said after the birth of her son, "so that all that hear [it] will laugh with me." Gen. 21, 6.

As God had commanded him — Gen. 17, 10. Isaac, Abraham's heir and heir to the special promise regarding the Messiah, received the Sacrament of Circumcision and was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

God's Command.

God did tempt Abraham — He tried, tested, his faith and obedience. (Sixth Petition. Cat., Qu. 257.)

Thine only son — The son to whom I have given that great promise. "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac thy seed shall be called." Heb. 11, 18.

Whom thou lovest — He had waited for him so long; he was the son of Abraham's old age; above all, the son of a special (Messianic) promise.

Moriah — In the vicinity of Salem (Jerusalem), about forty-five miles north of Beersheba. Later the Temple was built on Mount Moriah. (Map 10.)

Offer him for a burnt offering — Kill him and offer him as a burnt sacrifice, as was done with animals. Human sacrifices were common among the heathen races of Canaan. — Isaac was probably ten to twelve years old at that time.

Abraham's Obedience.

Rose up early — He obeyed the word of the Lord at once, without hesitating or attempting to argue with the Lord. — "No doubt, he did not tell Sarah a word about it. The shock would have been too great for her." (*Luther.*)

On the third day — It took them three days to reach that place. What a hard journey it was! — He left the servants ("his young men") whom he had taken with him on the journey at the foot of Mount Moriah; they could not understand the command the Lord had given their master. Abraham knew "that God was able to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead." Heb. 11, 19.

Laid it upon Isaac — Thus Christ had to carry the wood (His cross) when going to Golgotha.

Fire — Live coals (charcoal) in a brazier, or fire-pan.

Knife — An instrument of stone; a "sharp stone." Ex. 4, 25.

Where is the lamb? — This question must have cut the poor father to the quick. A sword pierced through his soul.

God will provide — God will show us when we shall get there.

Bound Isaac — As was customary when an animal was laid upon the altar of sacrifice.

Slay — Abraham, no doubt, finally told Isaac what God had commanded him to do.

The Promise Renewed.

And — At the very moment when Abraham was ready to do the deed. In God's eyes the sacrifice had been made. Heb. 11, 17: "Abraham . . . *offered up* Isaac."

Angel of the Lord — God the Son.

For now I know — Now thou hast clearly shown that thou art obedient to Me, even when thou art put to the highest test to which a man can be put.

Thine only son from Me — Thou hast proved that thou lovest Me above all things, more than thine only son.

A ram — The male of a sheep. God had provided for a substitute sacrifice.

Thicket — "A collection of trees or shrubs closely set."

The second time — After Abraham had offered the ram as a sacrifice "in the stead of his son."

By Myself have I sworn — Read Heb. 6, 13—17. "As I live" (Ezek. 33, 11), as sure as I live, the promise I gave thee shall be fulfilled.

In blessing I will bless; in multiplying I will multiply — This seeming redundance was to impress it all the more on Abraham's mind that He, the Lord, would not fail to do what He was promising here. (*NB.* The *Comprehensive Bible History* does not quote these words verbatim. See Gen. 22, 17.)

And in thy seed — The Messianic promise repeated.

Sarah's Death.

127 years old — Sarah is the only woman whose age at the time of her death is recorded in Holy Writ. — Isaac was in his thirty-seventh year.

Machpelah (double cave) The cave Abraham bought of Ephron, the Hittite, as a burial-place for his family, situ-

ated on the western slope in Hebron. (Map 8.) Gen. 23. Besides Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah were buried there. The burial-place has been preserved to this day. — This is the first piece of land that Abraham, the sojourner, or stranger, was able to call his own. The fact that he bought this family burial-place in Canaan showed that he fully believed the promise of the Lord regarding the possession of the entire country by his descendants.

Before Hebron — Abraham again removed from Beersheba to this town.

Isaac as a Type of Christ. — Isaac the only son — Christ likewise; Abraham loved his son very much — Christ was God the Father's "beloved Son" (Matt. 3, 17); Isaac was to be offered as an innocent victim — Christ was sacrificed on the cross as the "Lamb of God most holy," who had "done nothing amiss"; Isaac carried the wood for the sacrifice — Christ bore His cross; Isaac was willing to be bound and laid upon the wood on the altar — Christ "went uncomplaining forth, the guilt of all men bearing," etc. (See Hymn 191, 1. 3.)

Catechism: First Commandment ("love and trust"); Third Petition.

Hymns: 372, 11; 509, 3. 4; 494, 1. 2; 65, 1; 525, 4. 8—11.

Bible Readings: Heb. 11, 8—19; Jas. 2, 14—26.

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11. Isaac's Marriage.

"The heir of promise," Isaac, had, so to speak, been raised from the dead and given back to "the Father of the Faithful," and he and Sarah had been "made to laugh" (Gen. 21, 6), prompted to extraordinary gratitude, a second time. To-day we shall hear of Isaac's marriage, through which, by the blessing, and according to the promise, of God, he became an ancestor of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Abraham Sends Eliezer to Mesopotamia.

Abraham was old — 140 years of age.

Eldest servant, Eliezer — His chief officer and manager, who "ruled over all that he had." Gen. 24, 2. — All the servants in those days were slaves.

Swear by the Lord — This oath was demanded by the glory of God and the welfare of his fellow-men. (Cat., Qu. 25. Second Commandment.) — Isaac, the son of promise, must not marry a heathen wife ("of the daughters of the Canaanites"), but one who would confess the same faith with him, the faith in the promised Seed of Abraham.

My country — Mesopotamia, the land of his birth. (Map 4.)

My kindred — Abraham's relatives were not yet wholly devoid of the fear of God, as were the Canaanites.

Follow thee into this land — That condition had to be complied with. Under no condition was Isaac to go to that country out of which the Lord had called him (Abraham). Canaan was the Land of Promise.

Camels — Mentioned here for the first time. The camel is the most useful beast of burden in the Orient, "the ship of the desert"; also used for riding. In the Bible lands the one-humped camel (dromedary) is found. The feet of this camel are provided with a tough, elastic sole, which prevents them from sinking in the sand. The camel can travel through the sandy wastes for many days without a drink of water and is satisfied with the thorny shrubs it finds here and there by the wayside. For the comfort of women who travel on the backs of camels two boxes like small carriage-bodies are often hung upon the animal.

City of Nahor — Haran, in Mesopotamia, the home of Rebekah, about 500 miles from Hebron, Abraham's home. (Map 4.)

Well of water — In a dry and hot country like Palestine good wells were extremely valuable. They were deep (Jacob's Well, still preserved, having a depth of 75 feet to this day, while originally it must have been about twice as deep), lined with rough masonry, often dug into solid rock. To

protect them from the sand and from being used by others, they were covered, usually with a stone, and surrounded with a low wall. Round about them were stone troughs, of oblong and irregular shape, for the use of cattle. In the days of Abraham the water was generally drawn by pitchers, fastened by a rope.

O Lord God — He humbly and trustingly asked God to bless his undertaking. Matt. 7, 7. 8. "Take it to the Lord in prayer." (Cat., Qu. 211.)

Let the same be she — He "asked in faith, nothing wavering." Jas. 1, 6. A simple, childlike confidence. (Cat., Qu. 213.) Mark 11, 24: "Believe, . . . and ye shall have them."

Eliezer's Prayer Answered.

Before he had done speaking — Are we not here reminded of Is. 65, 24: "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear"? (Cat., Qu. 208.)

Rebekah — "One who fascinates," *i. e.,* with her beauty.

Bethuel — "Man of God." Nephew of Abraham.

Came out with her pitcher — Though she was the daughter of a rich man, she was not ashamed to perform even a menial service. — The pitcher was an earthen vessel with two handles. It was carried on the left shoulder and held with the right hand or carried on the head, and when presented, was rested on the left hand.

Went down to the well — "In Eastern wells the water is frequently reached by steps."

She said, Drink, my lord — Now Eliezer felt assured that the Lord had answered his prayer.

For thy camels also — Not a small undertaking to draw water for ten camels!

Golden earring — Rather, a nose-ring upon which jewels were strung.

Bracelets — Worn by both sexes in the Orient. (Wrist-watches in our day.)

Worshiped the Lord — He did not forget to thank the Lord for answering his prayer so signally. A lesson we need to learn ever better. (Cat., Qu. 124.)

Rebekah Wooed and Won for Isaac.

Laban — "White." His character belied his name, as we shall hear later. — As his father Bethuel seems to have been of a very quiet disposition and probably retired, he took the most active part in betrothing Rebekah to Isaac.

Blessed of the Lord — A fitting term by which to designate all children of God. See Gen. 26, 29; Ps. 37, 22; 115, 15; Is. 65, 23; Matt. 25, 34.

I will not eat until, etc. — A faithful servant indeed! He had previously proved his sterling character and faithfulness to his master. (Table of Duties: "To Servants," etc.)

Proceedeth from the Lord — It was evident that the Lord Himself had chosen Rebekah to become the wife of Isaac. — Bethuel, the father, is expressly mentioned as having given his consent to the betrothal. The parents' consent is essential for a valid betrothal of Christian young people. (Deut. 7, 3; Jer. 29, 6; Judg. 14, 2. — Cat., Qu. 43. 44; Eph. 6, 2. 3; Col. 3, 20.)

In the morning — Of the following day.

Wilt thou go, etc.? — Children must not be forced to a marriage. Willing consent.

Blessed Rebekah — Children should contract such marriages that they may be assured of the blessing of their parents.

Isaac's Marriage. Death of Abraham.

Meditate in the field — Isaac had early learned to commune with God in prayer. Besides the family devotion in his father's home he was wont to pray "in secret" (Cat., Qu. 215; Matt. 6, 6), in a certain part of the field, where he would be undisturbed. In this case he, no doubt, entreated the Lord graciously to bless the step he was intending to take.

Sarah's tent — The apartment of the tent formerly occupied by his deceased mother. — Isaac, at the time of his marriage, was forty years old.

He loved her — Feeling assured that the Lord Himself had chosen Rebekah to be his wife, he regarded and esteemed

her as his greatest earthly treasure. If the Lord has joined two hearts, they are happy with each other.

Abraham gave all that he had, etc. — Not Ishmael, Abraham's first-born, but Isaac, the son of promise, was to inherit both the temporal goods and the spiritual blessing which God had granted his father.

Catechism: Second Commandment: God-pleasing oath. Fourth and Sixth Commandments.

Hymns: 372, 1. 8. 9; 21, 5; 313; 346, 2; 532, 1.

Bible Readings: Ps. 90; 1 Pet. 3, 1—7; Ps. 128; Prov. 31, 10—31; Eph. 6, 1—9.

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12. Isaac Blesseth His Children.

As far as the promise of a son who would be the bearer of the Messianic promise is concerned, the Lord tested Isaac's faith in the same way in which He had proved the faith of his father Abraham. Twenty years he had to wait and to pray — and the Bible tells us that he did "entreat the Lord for his wife because she was barren" — before his prayer was heard. When the yearned-for blessing did come, it proved to be twofold — twins were born, both boys. — Which of these sons, now, was to be the transmitter of the Messianic promise given to Abraham? In our lesson this question is answered. But we shall also learn that Isaac, otherwise such an exemplary child of God, showed weakness of faith regarding this point.

Esau and Jacob.

Esau — "Hairy." Also called Edom on account of his reddish skin; his descandants, Edomites; their country, Idumea (or Edom), which extended from the Dead Sea southward to the Gulf of Akabah. (Map 2.)

Jacob — "Supplanter," or, "Holding on to the heels," *i. e.,* of Esau. It was a trick practised in wrestling to catch hold of the opponent's heel and thus to trip him.

Esau was a man of the field — He loved the sport of hunting and consequently was not much at home. He was of a roving disposition. Besides hunting, which was his main occupation, he also tilled the field.

Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents — A quiet, obedient boy and youth. He did not roam about like his brother, but stayed at home and shepherded the flock like his father and grandfather.

Isaac loved Esau — Isaac was partial to his first-born — a human weakness (favoritism) often met with.

Rebekah loved Jacob — The Lord had told her before the twins were born (Gen. 25, 23) that the younger of the two was to be the transmitter of the great blessing, the Messianic promise, given to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob was to be the ancestor of the Messiah, and because the Gospel of the coming Redeemer was the delight of her heart, her greatest concern was for the welfare of her younger son.

Jacob sod [seethed] *pottage* — He boiled lentil soup, "still a common article of diet in Egypt and Syria."

Feed me . . . red pottage — Esau sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a pottage of lentils, of which he was very fond. — The first-born, at the death of the father, became the head of the family. His portion of the inheritance was twice as great as that of his brothers (Deut. 21, 17), and, besides, he was made guardian of his unmarried brothers and sisters. It was considered a special divine favor to be the first-born of the family; Deut. 21, 17 the first-born is called "the beginning of his father's strength"; Gen. 49, 3, "the excellency of power" (chief of the clan). Jacob desired the right of the first-born mainly for the sake of the Messianic promise connected with it in this case, which Esau, who was not God-fearing, despised.

Sell me . . . thy birthright — Rebekah, no doubt, had told her favorite son what the Lord had revealed to her with regard to her two sons. Though laudably eager to obtain the blessings promised him by God, Jacob nevertheless should not have gone about it in this way, but ought to

have waited until God Almighty would have given him what he was longing for.

At the point to die — Well-nigh starved to death after a long and strenuous hunting expedition.

What profit, etc. — Esau, on the other hand, spurned the great boon connected with the patriarchal birthright. "Thus Esau despised his birthright." The grace of God was nothing to him! After he had finished his meal, he "rose up and went his way," wholly indifferent to what he had wantonly forfeited. (Cat., Qu. 34; Hos. 4, 6: "rejected knowledge," *i. e.,* God's saving Word.)

Two wives of the Hittites — In marrying two heathen women, Esau gave additional evidence of his worldly state of mind; nor did he worry in the least about the fact that, by taking such a step, he had caused his parents much grief. (Cat., Qu. 40: "provoke them to anger.") — The Hittites were descendants of Canaan. (Map 1; small inset map.) It was from the Hittites that Abraham purchased the family sepulcher.

Isaac Blesses Jacob.

Old — Isaac was now 137 years old; he lived to be 180. Gen. 35, 28.

Eyes dim — As much as blind.

Venison — "The flesh of edible beasts of chase; game." (In America the word is mostly applied to flesh of deer.)

I know not the day of my death — Though a well-known truth, it nevertheless needs to be emphasized. Job 14, 5 ("the number of his [man's] months are with *Thee*"); Ps. 31, 15.

Take thy quiver and thy bow — The quiver was the box, or case, for arrows. Arrows were used in hunting as well as in combat. They were originally made of reeds and afterwards of any light wood. The bows were made of flexible wood or steel (Ps. 18, 34: "bow of steel") and the bowstrings of leather, horsehair, or the tendons of animals. The quiver was slung over the shoulder in such a position that the soldier could draw out the arrows when wanted.

Savory — "Pleasing to the organs of taste or smell."

My soul may bless thee — He wanted to give him the blessing of the first-born. On account of the Messianic promise the blessing of the patriarchs was of very great importance.

Rebekah . . . said unto Jacob — When Rebekah learned that Isaac, contrary to the will of God, intended to give Esau the blessing of the first-born, she thought she would have to prevent this by taking the matter into her own hands. It was lack of confidence in the wisdom and ruling power of God, whose "work can no one hinder . . . His undertakings ever at length He carries through; What He designs He never can fail at all to do." (Cat., Qu. 102: "Father Almighty.")

Kids of the goats — The flesh of the wild goat of Palestine and Arabia is "nearly of the flavor of venison." This explains how it was possible to make blind Isaac believe that the "savory meat" Jacob was giving him was venison.

Deceiver . . . curse — 1) Jacob's conscience troubled him about using such a crafty device to deceive his practically blind old father. 2) He feared the evil consequences.

Upon me be thy curse — Knowing God's decree and promise, Rebekah was confident that, notwithstanding hers was a self-chosen step, God would not fail to fulfil His promise.

Goodly — "Of pleasing appearance." Rebekah gave Jacob the raiment of Esau which he wore when he performed the office of high priest of the family.

Smooth (noun) — The smooth part of his neck.

Jacob said — As he uttered one untruth after the other ("Esau" — "thou badest me" — "my venison") and finally resorted to an evasive answer ("Because the Lord," etc.), he must have felt very ill at ease. However, he believed he was doing right because he was acting in obedience to his mother.

Jacob's voice . . . hands of Esau — The old patriarch was completely puzzled. Here we see the hand of the Lord — Isaac was not to realize at this moment that he was being deceived.

My very [true] *son Esau?* — To the very last Isaac was intent on giving the best blessing to Esau.

The smell of his raiment — The garments of Esau which Jacob was wearing now had "gathered the odors of fragrant plants, which abound in the East, as the hunter had roamed the fields in search of game."

The dew of heaven — As rain rarely falls in Palestine between May and September, the dew was highly prized; for it falls so copiously as in a great measure to supply the absence of showers.

Fatness — Fruitfulness. Great temporal blessings were herewith promised Jacob and his descendants. Jacob became a man of great wealth; and as to his descendants — as long as the children of Israel feared God, they enjoyed great prosperity. Jeremiah, in his day, testified to the apostate people that God had, according to His promise, given them a land "flowing with milk and honey." Jer. 32, 22; 11, 5.

Nations bow down to thee — Fulfilled especially in the days of Saul, David, and Solomon.

Be lord over thy brethren — The Edomites — descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother — were conquered by Saul and David. For a long time Edom was a vassal of the kingdom of Judah.

Cursed be . . . blesseth thee — This was a spiritual blessing. Every man is cursed if he rejects Christ; blessed, if he accepts Him. Jacob represented the Old Testament Church of God.

Esau Also Receives a Blessing.

Isaac trembled — He trembled with fear. His conscience, no doubt, troubled him for having intended to give Esau the blessing of the first-born, although God had revealed to Rebekah already before the birth of the twins that the elder should serve the younger.

Break his yoke — In the days of King Joram. 2 Kings 8, 20—22. See also 1 Kings 11, 14.

He shall be blessed — I cannot take this blessing away from him; indeed, it is the Lord that blessed him. — *"Thy* blessing," the blessing I had intended to give thee.

Thy dwelling . . . fatness of the earth — "Of the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven Esau's dwelling-place would be, that is, away from the fruitful and fat fields of Canaan. There are some fertile valleys in the northeastern part of Idumea, where Esau and his descendants lived, but the greater part of Idumea is one of the dreariest and most sterile deserts in the world." (*Pop. Com.*) — The capital of the country was Selah, or Joktheel (2 Kings 14, 7); later called Petra.

By thy sword shalt thou live — Carry on warfare; live by robbery and pillage. His descendants would be a nation of hunters.

Shalt serve thy brother — For a long time.

Exceeding bitter cry — It was merely "the sorrow of the world" (2 Cor. 7, 10) which Esau showed here. Now he deeply regretted the selling of his birthright, but only on account of the temporal blessings given to the first-born. He tried to change his father's mind (that is what the words Heb. 12, 17: "he found no place of repentance" mean), but in vain; "he was rejected."

Heb. 11, 20 — Isaac believed in the promise of the Messiah given to his father.

Catechism: Third Commandment (not despise the spiritual blessings, but, etc.).

Hymns: 525, 4; 363, 5.

Bible Readings: Rom. 9, 6—16.

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13. Jacob's Ladder.

Because Jacob had received the blessing of the first-born, Esau was filled with hatred against him. He wanted to kill his brother. Jacob, therefore, was compelled to take refuge in a strange country. While on his way there, the Lord appeared to him in his sleep one night and gave him the Messianic promise.

Esau's Hatred and Rebekah's Advice.

Esau hated Jacob — "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John 3, 15. And the sin of hate grew so strong within him that he resolved to kill his twin brother. However, he cherished so much love for his father, who had intended to give him the blessing of the first-born, that he made up his mind to postpone the act until "the days of mourning for his father" (after his death and burial) would be over. (Cat., Qu. 47.)

Haran — (Map 4.)

Then I will send, etc. — She was never to see her favorite son again, for she died before Jacob returned from Mesopotamia.

Until thy brother's fury turn away — Until he will be ready to become reconciled to you.

Blessing of Abraham — (Gen. 12, 3.) Here Isaac said it still more plainly than in the preceding lesson that Jacob was to be the transmitter of the Messianic promise. He also amplified the temporal blessing by predicting that his descendants would be exceedingly numerous ("make thee fruitful . . . multiply thee . . . multitude of people") and would become possessors of the land of Canaan ("inherit the land . . . stranger"). — And he fully agreed with Rebekah's plan.

Jacob's Dream.

Jacob went out — He was 77 years old; his father Isaac, 137. — He had only his shepherd's staff when he left his father's home (Gen. 32, 10) and was all alone, a homeless wanderer; his goal, over five hundred miles; his route, over desolate tracts of country; dangers lurking here and there.

Certain place — Bethel, formerly Luz, on the road from Jerusalem to Shechem, about eight miles north of Jerusalem. (Map 5.) "One of the most desolate-looking places I ever saw." (*Geikie.*)

Tarried — Took his night-lodging there.

Put them for his pillows — Used them instead of pillows; made them serve as such. "The star-spangled vault of heaven as a canopy over his head." (*Rawlinson.*)

A ladder . . . reached to heaven — This ladder was a type of Christ (John 1, 51), through whom heaven and earth, God and sinful mankind, separated by the Fall, have been reunited. Through the atoning work of Christ, God the Father has become reconciled to the sinner. He is the only Mediator between God and men. 1 Tim. 2, 5; Eph. 2, 16.

The angels of God — The holy angels had been Jacob's invisible protectors and guardians, and they bore his prayers, as on wings, to the throne of God.

In thy seed . . . blessed — The covenant I made with thy father and grandfather, the covenant of grace through the Seed of Abraham, the Redeemer, I herewith renew with thee; and it shall pass upon thy descendants. And as to the temporal blessings, thy descendants shall occupy this land (Canaan) through which thou art passing now; it shall be their country.

Jacob's Vow.

How dreadful — *Not*, fearful, terrible, *but*, inspiring awe or reverence.

House of God — "Where God's Word is heard, as was the case here, there is God's house." (*Luther.*)

Gate of heaven — Entrance to the mansions of heavenly bliss, because God revealed Himself there.

Rose up early — A phrase we often meet with in the Old Testament accounts of the acts of the great men of God. Might be commented on in passing.

Pillar — Stood it upright like a pillar, as a monument, remembrance, of this gracious heavenly vision.

Poured oil — To consecrate it temporarily to the service of God. Later he would build an altar on that very spot.

Bethel — Meaning "house of God."

Vowed a vow — A promise voluntarily made. The first instance of a vow recorded in Scripture. A vow is a solemn religious promise or covenant by which one binds himself to do or suffer certain things, depending on God for power to accomplish them. — 1) Jacob's vow showed that he was aware of God's omnipotence and omnipresence. 2) It contained a confession of his own impotence. 3) It revealed

his sincere wish and prayer that God would protect him on his entire earthly pilgrimage. 4) At the same time it showed how much he yearned to return to the home he had been compelled to leave.

Then shall the Lord be my God — The supreme treasure of my heart; and therefore I shall serve Him faithfully. — The Lord always had been "his God"; however, if the Lord would permit him to return to this place, he promised to erect an altar there and *proclaim it publicly* to the heathen round about that He is the only true God and the Savior of sinners.

This stone shall be God's house — More than twenty years later Jacob lived up to his promise, though he had to be reminded of it by God Himself. Gen. 35, 7. — Ps. 50, 14: "Pay thy vows unto the Most High." (Second Commandment: "give thanks." Paying one's vow is giving thanks in *deed.*)

Jacob Arrives at His Uncle's Home.

Land of the East — He had probably first journeyed north, up to the sources of the river Jordan, and was now going east, to Mesopotamia. (Map 4.)

Son of Nahor — Laban was the grandson of Nahor, the son of Bethuel. Grandfathers are often called fathers in the Bible and grandsons, sons. (It will be well to remember this.)

Kissed Rachel — She was his cousin.

Wept — Wept for joy at seeing one of his kin after having seen none but strange people for weeks.

Laban ran to meet him — It was ninety-seven years since he had seen Rebekah leave her father's and his home. He gave his nephew a hearty welcome, but later treated him shamefully.

Catechism: First Article: "defends . . . guards . . . protects." Qu. 114; angels ministering to God's children.

Hymns: 285—287.

Bible Readings: Ps. 34, 7; 91, 9—16; 103, 20. 21; Dan., chaps. 3 and 6; Acts 12, 5—11.

14. Jacob and Laban.

From Beersheba, his home, Jacob had traveled northward and, after having rested at Bethel, had crossed the Jordan and the hot desert, passed through Damascus, crossed the Euphrates, and, finally, having traversed 500 miles, all afoot, arrived at Haran, in Mesopotamia, Abraham's native home. (Map 4.) It was a long and exceedingly tedious journey to make all alone.

Jacob Serves Laban.

Leah — "Wearied." She was "tender-eyed," pale-eyed; her eyes lacked the usual luster found with young people. With the Orientals black, glistening eyes are the prime requisite when marks of beauty are considered.

Rachel — "Ewe." She was beautiful of face and form.

Serve thee seven years — A dowry was given, "not by the father to his daughter, but by the bridegroom (betrothed) to the parents of the bride. The primitive idea of the Hebrew marriage evidently was that the bride was bought, and in many cases the bridegroom paid the dowry in actual service." (*Schaff.*) The father was thus paid for the loss he sustained by giving his daughter to the suitor to be his wife. The dowry was commensurate with the station in life or the wealth of the father-in-law. Laban, being a rich man, demanded a very high dowry for his daughters, according to the commercialistic spirit which wholly dominated him — "he knew he could get it"!

Leah instead of Rachel — This deceit could easily be practised without being detected at once by Jacob because, according to custom, Leah was brought into the bridal chamber heavily veiled. (Cat., Qu. 36; Matt. 7, 12.)

Laban said, etc. — A mean subterfuge. Why did he not say so in the first place, when his nephew sued for the hand of the younger daughter?

Rachel also — Polygamy is plainly contrary to the institution of God, as Christ says, Matt. 19, 4. 5 ("they twain shall be one flesh"). It was a sin of weakness with many of the people of God in the Old Testament until the days of the Captivity, a sin which the Lord, as it were, condoned,

just as He "endures with much long-suffering" the many shortcomings, faults, and infirmities of His children of the New Covenant.

Twelve sons — The ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel, — although later the Levites were not classed as a separate tribe, one of the two sons of Joseph taking their place. — Noted descendants of the sons of Jacob: Of Reuben — none; of Simeon — none, "though the Jews have a tradition that this tribe furnished schoolmasters to the rest of the nation"; of Levi: Moses, Aaron, and many other famous high priests of Israel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, John the Baptist; of Judah: Caleb, David, Solomon, and all the kings of the kingdom of Judah, Isaiah (no doubt), Daniel, — above all: "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" (Jesus); of Dan: Samson; of Naphtali: Barak; of Gad: Jephthah, Barzillai (the noble-hearted friend of David), and Elijah; of Asher: Anna, the prophetess (Luke 2, 36); of Issachar: Tola, one of the Judges of Israel, Omri, a prince during the reign of David, and Baasha, a usurper; of Zebulun: Ibzan and Elon, two of Israel's Judges, and the prophet Jonah; of Joseph: Ephraim and Manasseh, his sons, tribal ancestors, Joshua (Ephraim), Gideon (Manasseh); of Benjamin, Ehud, Saul, and Paul the Apostle. (Close of Commandments.)

Jacob Acquires Great Wealth.

Let me go to my country — He had been away from home fourteen years.

Blessed me for thy sake — His conscience told him that, because there was no genuine fear of God in his heart, the increase of his riches during the last fourteen years was due only to the fact that God blessed the faithful services of his God-fearing nephew. (Table of Duties: "To Servants": "doing service as to the Lord.") — The request he made was born of rank selfishness.

Appoint me, etc. — Fix, determine, your wages yourself.

Jacob demanded as hire, etc. — This seemed to be a very modest demand as most of the sheep in Palestine are white

and the goats either black or dark-brown, seldom "spotted and speckled." But the Lord Himself (Gen. 31, 12), desiring to punish Laban and bless Jacob, suggested to the latter the employing of a device by which the number of the "spotted and speckled" goats and sheep would be greatly increased.

Changed his wages ten times – Always with a view to getting the better of Jacob. (Cat., Qu. 59; Hab. 2, 6; 1 Thess. 4, 6; Jer. 22, 13.)

Exceedingly rich — "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich." Prov. 10, 22.

Asses — Asses are very frequently mentioned in the Bible; the first time Gen. 22, 5. They were used both as animals of burden and for agricultural purposes. They subsist on very coarse food and submit to the meanest drudgery. "The attachment of this animal to its owner is among its remarkable characteristics." Is. 1, 3.

Return — The Lord Himself delivered Jacob from the clutches of his greedy and wily uncle. Besides, He wanted him to make his real home in the Land of Promise, Canaan. And He promised him protection. (First Article: "protects me.")

Jacob Takes Refuge in Flight.

To the field — Where they were out of earshot of any member of Laban's household. A secret flight was planned.

Your father's countenance — At first Laban had been very kind to him, though selfish nevertheless; but now envy, suspicion, and hatred showed forth in his every feature.

Whatsoever God hath said, etc. — Because their father had treated them, together with their husband, so shamefully, Leah and Rachel were all the more willing to follow their joint husband into a distant, strange country. In this, too, we can see the hand of God.

Jacob rose up, etc. — Without the knowledge of Laban.

All his goods — All that he possessed.

Overtook him — Laban, of course, with his men, was able to cover more ground in an hour than Jacob with his wives and children. On the tenth day after Jacob's flight he had overtaken him. Gen. 31, 22. 23.

Mount Gilead — East of the river Jordan, northeast of Jerusalem. (Map 3.) A very fertile country. The balm of Gilead, the product of the terebinth-tree and similar plants, an exceedingly odoriferous resin, was held in high esteem for its healing properties. Jer. 8, 22; 46, 11.

Either good or bad — "Literally, Laban should, in speaking to Jacob, not pass from good to bad, from a hasty greeting of his daughters and their children to reproaches and other indications of anger." (*Pop. Com.*)

In my power . . . but, etc. — The enemies of God's children cannot harm them unless He permits it for reasons of His own.

The God of your father — "Father" in a wider sense: Abraham and Isaac. He was not *his* (Laban's) God, the God whom *he* adored.

Covenant — A binding agreement of friendship. Laban feared Jacob's revenge because he knew he had wronged him. (Bad conscience. Rom. 2, 15; Cat., Qu. 8.)

On his way — To his home.

God's host — God's innumerable army, which had protected him and his family on his homeward journey. What a comforting vision!

Mahanaim — "Two camps," or "double host." (Map 3.) — "The angel of the Lord *encampeth* round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. 34, 7.

Catechism: First Article: "defends me . . . all evil." Angels, Qu. 114. Third Petition: "breaks and hinders," etc.

Hymns: 313, 1; 498, 6. 7; 63; 62, 9; 526, 1. 2; 372, 8. 9.

Bible Readings: Ps. 91; 121.

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15. Jacob's Return. Gen. 32-35

The fact that the Lord had vouchsafed Jacob a vision of angels after he had made a covenant with his father-in-law comforted him exceedingly and strengthened him for what was to follow. He knew he had to meet his irate

brother Esau, who, twenty years ago, had threatened to take his life. How would that dreaded meeting turn out? And what was to be his attitude in the matter? — He took the matter to the Lord in prayer, and the result was beyond his fondest expectation.

Jacob's Message to Esau.

Messengers — Slaves of his household. While Jacob's caravan rested, these messengers, no doubt riding on asses, were dispatched to Seir, the country south of the Dead Sea, where Esau lived.

Thy servant — Esau had become quite a mighty chief of a warlike tribe, while Jacob had followed peaceful pursuits and was not in a position to meet any one in battle. Esau was a lord (Gen. 32, 5) in comparison with him.

Find grace — Favor. He asked his brother to forget and forgive. (Cat., Qu. 252; Matt. 5, 23. 24.)

Cometh to meet thee — Jacob had reason to fear the worst.

Divided the people — A clever precautionary measure. He separated the two bands by some distance in order to save at least half of his family and possessions.

Jacob's Prayer.

As a true child of God, Jacob did not rely on the safety measures he had taken (Prov. 35: "lean not unto thine own understanding"; Jer. 17, 5: did not "make flesh his arm"), but trusted in the Lord and sought help with Him. (Cat., Qu. 14.)

O God, my father, etc. — In asking for divine protection and deliverance, his trust was in the covenant God, who had promised that Seed through whom the sinful world should be blessed.

I am not worthy, etc. — Acknowledgment of one's utter unworthiness "of the least" of God's grace and goodness is the *first* essential of every God-pleasing prayer. — Gratitude, though not directly expressed, was *implied* in these words.

Truth — The Lord had fulfilled the promise given him (Lesson 14). (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 33, 4: "all His works done in truth.")

Two bands — A man of great wealth. He had "much cattle, and maid-servants, and men-servants, and camels, and asses." Gen. 30, 40.

Deliver me — He implored the Lord for His gracious help and firmly believed that his prayer would be heard — the *second* essential of a proper prayer. (Cat., Qu. 213.)

Prepared presents for Esau — Droves of sheep, goats, camels, cows, and asses — in all, 580 head. He tried his utmost to appease his brother.

Jabbok — One of the largest tributaries of Jordan. (Map 3.)

Ford — Jacob had sent his family and his cattle, etc., across the Jabbok where the water was shallow.

Jacob was left alone — It was to be a night of prayer, and he wished to be undisturbed. — Jesus always retired to a place of solitude when He desired to commune with His beloved Father for a greater length of time. (Cat., Qu. 215; Matt. 6, 6: "closet"; "in secret.")

Jacob's Faith.

A Man — The Son of God.

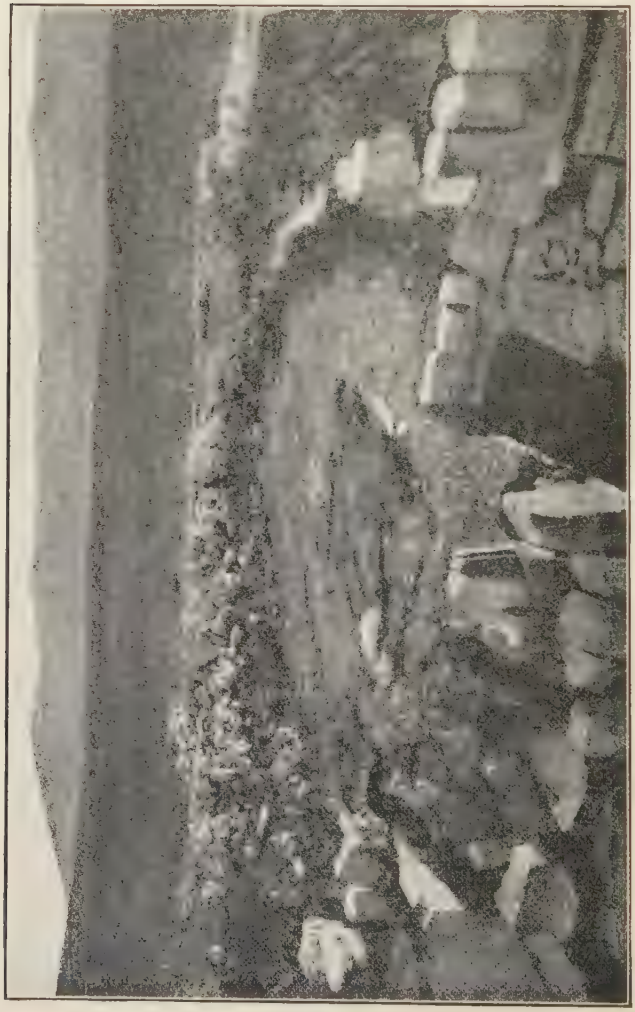
He prevailed not — He did not want to use His divine strength. The Lord delights in seeing us wrestling with Him in trustful prayer.

Out of joint — His hip was sprained or paralyzed.

Except Thou bless me — Realizing that He who was wrestling with him was not a human being, but the great God Himself, he asked for the privilege of a blessing spoken by Him then and there.

What is thy name? — This question was put, not because the Son of God did not know Jacob's name, but because the answer to be given was to offer Him an occasion to give His ancestor according to the flesh a new name.

Israel = "He who prevails with God," or "A prince with God."



Jacob's Well Near Shechem.

Blessed him — Repeated the blessing He had given him twenty years previous (Lesson 14).

Peniel = "Face of God." (Map 3.) — In heaven we shall see our Savior face to face. (Cat., Qu. 205; 1 John 3, 2: "see Him as He is.")

My life is preserved — Having seen God face to face, he felt assured that his prayer for deliverance from his brother was granted.

The Reconciliation.

Bowed . . . seven times — Made obeisance, such as was made by an inferior to a superior, by prostrating himself to the ground. This, too, touched the heart of Esau, as, no doubt, the sending of those liberal presents had done before.

Esau ran . . . kissed him — A striking contrast between this meeting and the parting of the brothers twenty years ago. A complete reconciliation had been effected. The Lord had turned Esau's heart. See Prov. 16, 7.

Jacob urged him — He insisted upon Esau's accepting his present because it would be to him a pledge, as it were, of a return of his brotherly affections.

Shalem — A place three miles east of Shechem. (Map 7.)

Bought a parcel of a field — There he dug a well, which was still in good condition in the days of Christ (New Testament Lesson 13), a mile and a half southeast of Shechem, at the eastern base of Mount Gerizim. The well is an almost square enclosure, 151×192 feet. The wall of it is almost entirely destroyed, and the ground is covered with shapeless ruins.

Erected an altar — He offered sacrifices and publicly confessed the true God. His household alone was no small congregation of worshipers.

Go up to Bethel — The Lord, it seems, had to remind Jacob of the vow he had made before going to his uncle Laban. He had lived ten years in Canaan now, and still no altar had as yet been built by his hand. (Cat., Qu. 124: "my *duty*"; Ps. 118, 1.)

Mamre — The place where Abraham lived when the Son of God and two angels visited him. — Hebron. (Map 8.)

Isaac . . . died — Jacob saw his father again before the latter died, but not his mother. At the burial of Isaac, Jacob and Esau met again and buried their father in the cave Machpelah, in which Abraham and Sarah had found their last resting-place.

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust in God"); Second Commandment ("call upon it . . . give thanks"); First Article ("without any merit . . . me"); Fifth Petition (Esau and Jacob).

Hymns: 346, 4; 415, 1. 4; 88; 185.

Bible Readings: Matt. 15, 21—28; Ps. 133; Matt. 18, 21—35.

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16. Joseph and His Brethren.

Jacob, the last of the patriarchs, had a heavy cross to bear. His daughter Dinah brought shame upon his name, and his sons caused him much grief. "Evil have the days of the years of my life been." Gen. 47, 9. — With this chapter we are beginning the story of Joseph, "unquestionably the most thrilling chapter in the annals of Israel," "one of the most interesting histories in the world."

Joseph's Dreams. — The Brothers Envy Him.

Evil report — Through their shameful behavior they had gained a bad reputation in the neighborhood. (Cat., Qu. 42: "wickedness" of children.)

Loved Joseph more — "Because he was the son of his old age" (Gen. 37, 3), and because he was the first-born of Rachel, to whom he was more attached than to Leah; furthermore, because he was a pious, God-fearing son. — Meaning of his name: "May God add!" As Joseph was the first child born of Rachel, Jacob expressed the desire that the Lord would grant him more children of his favorite wife.

Coat [tunic] *of many colors* — This was, properly speaking, a "shirt of extremities," a "shirt" which reached to the feet; probably made of fine material. (Schaff,

Bible Dict.) — It was a plaited garment, adorned with stripes of various colors, and with sleeves attached (quite often these coats were sleeveless), and reaching down to the ankles. According to 2 Sam. 13, 18, these coats were worn by the children of kings, or by such as had no need to toil for their living. The shepherds or herdsmen (and therefore Joseph's brothers) wore a plain, one-colored garment, without sleeves, and reaching only to the knees. This favoritism of Jacob was to cost him dear.

They hated him — At first envy rose within their hearts, and this grew into downright hatred and enmity. (Cat., Qu. 47.)

Not speak peaceably — The common mode of address on meeting one another, was, "Peace be with thee!" Judg. 19, 20; 1 Sam. 25, 6. In other words, their enmity was so deep-seated that not a word of greeting passed their lips when they saw him.

Sheaves — Bundles or stalks of grain. The grain was cut with the sickle and bound into sheaves by hand.

Made obeisance — Made a gesture of reverence, or respect, as to a person of high rank, a ruler of the land.

Reign over us? — They were the prophets of their own subsequent history; for twenty-two years later Joseph did reign over them, and they made obeisance to him (in Egypt). — This and the second dream were not ordinary dreams, but prophetic visions sent by God.

A dream more — Guileless Joseph was entirely frank in telling his dreams, probably least aware of all of their meaning. He was no ambitious schemer.

His father rebuked him — Reproved, reprehended him; gave him a "calling-down."

Thy mother — Leah. Rachel was dead, having died at the birth of Benjamin, at Bethlehem. Gen. 35, 19. — Note that Joseph's stepmother is called his "mother."

Envied him — Were jealous of him, but also mocked and derided him. — Jealousy is a sin against the two commandments forbidding covetousness.

His father observed the saying — Did not regard it as a mere every-day dream, but meditated, pondered, over it, wondering whether this extraordinary dream would come true.

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS PLOT TO KILL HIM.

Shechem — Where Jacob owned some land (Gen. 33, 19), about 55 miles north of Hebron. When Joseph found his brothers, they were feeding their flocks at Dothan (Gen. 37, 17), fifteen miles north of Shechem. (Map 7.)

Dreamer — Here a jeering nickname.

Slay him — Mark: First hate, then envy, then the cold-blooded plot to kill their brother! Remember the story of Cain. The sad progression of sin! (Cat., Qu. 81; Jas. 1, 15.)

And say — Finally a lie to cover up their sin. Like Adam and Eve after the fall into sin. (Eighth Commandment.)

Evil beast — Lions, bears, wolves, leopards, and hyenas were wild beasts found in Canaan.

We shall see what, etc. — They did not take the Ruler of the universe into account. What He has decreed will come to pass.

Reuben . . . delivered him — Not only did he take pity on his brother, but, being the eldest, his was the greatest responsibility over against his father.

Pit — A cistern, or reservoir, which the Eastern people are in the habit of preparing in those regions where there are few or no springs, for the purpose of preserving rain-water for travelers and cattle. These cisterns, shaped like a bottle with a narrow mouth, which made it impossible for a prisoner to extricate himself, are often without water, there being no supply for them except from the rain. It was such a dry cistern into which Joseph was cast. (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) — To this day cisterns and wells are made use of for disposing of an enemy, in order that his corpse may not be found.

Wilderness — A region without human habitations, but frequently containing good pasturage.

Sat down to eat bread — As they themselves confessed, later on (Gen. 42, 21): "We saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and *we would not hear.*" It was a case of cruel, brutal heartlessness — unnatural hardness of heart.

Joseph Sold into Slavery.

Ishmaelites — Descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar. Gen. 16, 15. The caravans traveling between Damascus and Egypt passed through Canaan. In the Bible (Gen. 37, 25. 28) first Ishmaelites are mentioned and then Midianites. Both of these nations lived south of Canaan. They were looked upon as one nation, and they frequently traveled together, which, it seems, was the case here.

Spicery, balm, and myrrh — Spicery, probably the gum of shrubby and thorny plants which, with myrrh, was used in embalming; balm, the aromatic balsam, for which Gilead was noted; myrrh, a fragrant gum, possessing medicinal and preservative properties.

Let us sell our brother — Judah did not want to become guilty of the loss of his brother's life outright. But he and Reuben did not have the courage of their conviction. And as to Judah's proposal, to be sold into slavery was a fate worse than death for poor Joseph. — Probably, too, a mercenary spirit induced Judah to hit upon such a scheme.

Twenty pieces of silver — $12.50. Silver constituted the chief medium of trade, though it was not coined, going by weight (Gen. 23, 16); and the Hebrew word for this metal denoted money in general. (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) — Note: Joseph here a type of Christ.

Rent his clothes — A sign of extreme grief and sadness. Reuben had not been present when the sale was effected.

Whither shall I go? — The responsibility for his brother's welfare bore down heavily upon him.

This have we found — Criminals of the lowest type! An apt illustration of Satan's power over the hearts of men. (Cat., Qu. 258: "the devil . . . seduce us . . . great shame and vice." 1 Pet. 5, 8. 9.)

JACOB BOWED DOWN WITH GRIEF.

Refused to be comforted — Those hypocrites of sons trying to comfort their father! Miserable comforters (Job 16, 2) they were!

Go down into the grave — I shall die of grief.

Jas. 3, 16 — Envy and hatred lead to still more heinous sins. There is no evil deed such people will shrink from ("there is *every* evil work").

CATECHISM: Fourth, Fifth (Cat., Qu. 47), and Eighth Commandments; Sixth Petition ("the devil . . . seduce us . . . great shame and vice").

HYMNS: 247, 7; 516, 1. 2; 498, 1, 7; 525, 2—8.

BIBLE READINGS: Ps. 86; 2 Cor. 4, 8—10; 1 John 4, 7—21; Jas. 3, 13—18.

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17. Joseph in Egypt.

Joseph, the God-fearing son of Jacob, had been shamefully sold into slavery by his own brothers. Such buying and selling of human beings like cattle was very common in those days. Those slaves were kept under very close watch and were often ill-treated. They had nothing they could call their own and were given no rights before the law. They could be sold to other masters at will. Such was the condition of poor Joseph. But he trusted in God; and the childlike fear of God kept him from falling into sin.

JOSEPH IN THE HOUSE OF POTIPHAR.

Egypt — In the Valley of the Nile, in Northeastern Africa. (Map 2.) — One of the most remarkable countries in ancient history. It figures largely in the Bible as the cradle of the people of Israel. It was far advanced in civilization, much more so than Canaan. Agriculture, architecture, the arts, and education in general had reached a high stage in those days. (See "Annotational Matter," p. 84.)

Potiphar — A distinguished officer of Pharaoh's court. (The name means: "Belonging to the sun.")

Pharaoh — Not the name of the then reigning king, but a generic title applied to all the Egyptian kings. — The Pharaoh of the time of Joseph "was the last, or last but one, of the fifteenth dynasty, probably identical with Apophis."

Captain of the guard — Commanding officer of the king's body-guard; also superintendent of the government prison.

Bought him of the Ishmaelites — Joseph became Potiphar's slave and at first, no doubt, had to do the lowest kind of menial service.

Prosper — The Lord blessed him, so much so that success was written upon everything he did. God blessed him because he was so faithful. (Fourth Commandment: "that it may be well with thee" — applies also to servants.)

Overseer — Master of the household, manager of Potiphar's magnificent estate. He was held in very high esteem by Potiphar. "He left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat." Gen. 39, 6.

Joseph's Purity.

Goodly person, well-favored — Like his mother. Gen. 29, 17. When the following incident occurred, he was about twenty-seven years old.

Cast her eyes upon Joseph — By looking frequently at this comely youth, sinful lusts arose within her. "Eyes full of adultery." 2 Pet. 2, 14. (Cat., Qu. 52.)

Lie with me — Such evil desires the Bible calls lust of the flesh; the cause of adultery and fornication. (Cat., Qu. 81; Jas. 1, 14. 15.)

How can I do, etc. — When he was tempted to sin, he immediately thought of the holy God, and the childlike fear of God made him shudder merely to think of offending Him and rousing His wrath by committing such a sin, and although Potiphar's wife "spake to him day by day" (Gen. 39, 10), he firmly withstood the temptation. (Cat., Qu. 16 ["fear God"]; Ps. 33, 8: "fear the Lord.")

To do his business — To give his daily orders to the man- and maid-servants in the palatial residence.

His garment — The outer or upper garment.

Fled — Filled with horror of the sin of unchastity. (Cat., Qu. 54: "flee," etc.; Prov. 1, 10.)

Hebrew man — The word Hebrew is derived from Eber, one of the ancestors of Abraham. Gen. 10, 24; 11, 13.

Mock me — What she meant was: to have shameful intercourse with her. Mark how she slanders innocent Joseph! (Eighth Commandment.)

He fled out — Fearing lest he be caught and punished. — A consummate villain she was! Her lustful love for that fine youth turned to murderous hate. She wanted to see innocent Joseph treated as a criminal! — The devil is a liar *and* a murderer, and those who follow him are like him also in this respect. (Cat. Qu. 115: "enemies of . . . man." John 8, 44.)

Joseph in Prison.

Put him into the prison — Which Potiphar, as the commanding officer of the king's body-guard, had a right to do. — Joseph was in the same prison with the state criminals. Ps. 105, 18: "Whose feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in iron."

Gave him favor — The keeper of the prison held Joseph in high esteem because he noticed that the Lord was with him, that he was innocent of any crime.

Committed to Joseph's hand — Made him an underkeeper, a subinspector.

Butler; baker — Oriental princes had many cooks, bakers, and butlers at their courts. The office of butler (cupbearer) particularly was much sought after. The two prisoners of the royal household in our lesson were the chief butler and the chief baker. — The butler's duty was to press the juice out of the grape-berries, fill the cup, bring it to the king, and take the first sip to assure the king that the cup contained no poison.

Joseph Interprets Two Dreams.

No interpreter — We have no one to tell us what the meaning of our dreams may be. There were quite a number of people in Egypt who made it their business to interpret peculiar dreams. (Cat., Qu. 26.)

Interpretations belong to God — Interpreting dreams is a supernatural gift which only God can bestow. — Joseph shows both pity and humility.

Think on me — He was so sure of the correctness of his interpretation that he asked the chief butler to show his gratitude to him as soon as he would be restored to his former office.

On my head — Representations have been found in Egypt in which confectioners are portrayed with baskets on their heads.

Bakemeats — Pastry.

Hang thee on a tree (gallows) — The Egyptians embalmed the bodies of the dead, and therefore it was considered a great shame to have a corpse devoured by ravenous birds.

Pharaoh's birthday — On that day the king was wont to grant pardons to certain criminals. The chief baker, no doubt, had been found to be guilty of the crime he had been suspected of by his royal master.

Forgot him — "Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend!" The Lord wished to refine Joseph in the furnace of affliction. Is. 48, 10.

Catechism: First, Sixth, Eighth Commandments; Sixth Petition.

Hymns: 194, 2; 247, 8; 346, 1; 525, 6. 9. 10; 415, 4.

Bible Readings: Ps. 119, 9—16; 1 Cor. 6, 18—20; Ps. 73, 23—28; Mal. 3, 13—18.

As to Dreams.

"A dream is a thought, or series of thoughts, of a person in sleep; the states or acts of a soul during sleep, the objects of which are imagined to be real."

Natural dreams are such as originate from natural causes, being the continuation of one's thoughts during the day.

Divine dreams are divine revelations given by God in an extraordinary manner, the dreamer either hearing no word spoken (Gen. 41), or being spoken to (Gen. 31, 11. 24; Matt. 2, 2 ff.; Gen. 20, 3), or both taking place (Gen. 28, 12. 13; Acts 16, 9), or not seeing the angel or Divine Person speaking to him (Matt. 1, 20; 27, 19); or God operates without any means whatsoever. God's purpose in giving such dreams always was to reveal His love to sinners for their and the entire Church's welfare (Matt. 2, 12. 13; 19, 22) or for the benefit of the civil government, or to make known His righteous government of the world (Dan. 4. 5). — Such dreams are no longer to be expected in our days, nor should we ask God to send them, for He has revealed His divine will sufficiently in Holy Writ. Heb. 1, 1 ff.

Finally, there are dreams of *Satanic* origin, to wit, such as lure and tempt one to sin, or those which frighten and terrify one. If troubled with such dreams, one should, on awakening, ask the Lord in prayer to forgive the sinful thoughts and desires aroused by Satan, or to ward off the evil which Satan made us believe in our dreams was threatening us.

Christians must not lay undue stress on dreams, but fear God and confidently trust in Him. The Preacher says (Eccl. 5, 7): "In the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities; but fear thou God." It is a sin, therefore, to believe that one's dreams will always come true and to read dream- or fortune-books to see what they might mean. Lev. 20, 6 the Lord says: "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits [also those who interpret dreams] and after wizards to go a-whoring after them, I will even set My face against that soul and will cut him off from among his people." When troubled and worried by dreams, a Christian should follow the advice of the Psalmist (Ps. 55, 22): "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee; He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

For naught can come, as naught has been,
But what my Father has foreseen.
And what shall work my good.

18. Joseph Before Pharaoh. Gen. 41

"Through cross to crown," such are God's ways in dealing with His people. Joseph was no exception to this rule. Though the most beloved son of his father, he was sold into slavery, taken into a strange country, apparently with no prospects of seeing his home again, and to fill the cup of his tribulations to the brim, he was innocently cast into prison because a malicious woman had most shamefully maligned him. But the Lord wonderfully delivered him.

Pharaoh's Dreams.

Two full years — Since the chief butler had been pardoned and given his freedom.

Pharaoh dreamed — God sent this and the second dream. It was fraught with incalculably great and beneficial consequences for His "peculiar people." *God* rules the destinies of men and whole nations. (Cat., Qu. 120.)

River — Nile. (Map 2.) The word "Nile" does not occur in Scripture; generally simply called "the river." One of the longest streams in the world. The great feature is its annual overflow, which renders the otherwise barren valley one of the most fruitful regions in the world. It was worshiped by the Egyptians as a god.

Well-favored — Well-formed; pleasing to the eyes. — *Kine,* cows.

Seven ears of corn . . . upon one stalk — On some varieties of the Egyptian wheat six to seven ears are seen on one stalk.

Blasted — Withered and blighted by the khamsin, a hot southerly wind in Egypt (blowing over the desert to the east, about fifty days before the vernal equinox); the simoom.

His spirit was troubled — He had a presentiment that these dreams boded him no good.

Magicians — "Magic was the art of influencing future events and changing their course by dark and secret means. The magician was believed to stand in connection with demons, and even with the gods themselves, and to be able to compel them to act according to his will. Of the religion

of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, etc., magic formed an essential element." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

None that could interpret, etc. — God did not permit the devil to interpret these dreams through the practitioners of the black art. His hour had come in which He wished to deliver innocent Joseph from his imprisonment and to usher in a new era for His people. His servant Joseph was to interpret the dreams.

Remember my faults — Better late than never. A frank confession.

In ward — "Under guard" — in prison.

It came to pass — Something that could not be said of every so-called interpretation of the Egyptian magicians.

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams.

Then Pharaoh sent, etc. — The words of the butler had made such an impression upon him that he was willing to let that young man of the despised and insignificant Hebrew race, the inmate of a prison at that, appear before him. "God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."

Shaved himself . . . changed his raiment — To look presentable when he would appear in the presence of His Majesty. — The Hebrews regarded their beard with peculiar pride and cultivated it with care; the Egyptians, on the other hand, never allowed the hair to grow unless they were in mourning, etc.

Come in unto Pharaoh — Imagine the heathen priests and magicians standing in the royal palace in robes of transparent linen, the king's great officers in solemn attendance; Pharaoh seated in the midst of them all; the magnificent royal palace glittering with gold and other precious metals and furnished with the greatest of splendor. Into this assembly steps that young Hebrew slave, simple, embarrassed, grave, — but nevertheless with the assurance that the God of his fathers had sent him here, and that he had an important mission to perform.

Understand a dream — Understand the hidden meaning.

It is not in me — I cannot boast such supernatural in-

tellectual powers. God must endow me with the wisdom needed to understand these dreams. — Joseph was a humble child of God. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; . . . but let him . . . glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me." Jer. 9, 23. 24. (Cat., Qu. 15; Is. 42, 8; Prov. 3, 5: "lean not unto thine own understanding.")

An answer of peace — God is kindly disposed toward you — for the sake of Jacob's family and later descendants, His Church, which Egypt was to harbor for the next two hundred odd years.

The dream of Pharaoh is one — Both dreams signify the same thing.

Seven years of famine — In 1908 inscriptions were discovered in Egypt according to which "for seven successive years the Nile did not overflow and vegetation withered and failed; the land was devoid of crops, and during these years famine and misery devastated the land of Egypt."

Great plenty — In fruitful years the harvest in Egypt often was a hundredfold.

Established by God — Those seven years each of plenty and famine are sure to come. God has decreed it so, and therefore it is a settled fact.

Discreet and wise — A man of good administrative ability, who would know how to garner the superabundance of the seven fruitful years in such a way that utter starvation would be staved off during the years of famine. The humble young Hebrew had no inkling that he would be appointed to that exalted position — he, the foreigner and a slave!

The fifth part — The fifth of all that would be harvested in those seven years of plenty, and of a quality that would make it fit to be stocked up, or stored, in huge granaries to be erected in large centers of distribution.

Joseph's Advancement.

Good in the eyes of Pharaoh — He marveled at the exceedingly wise counsel of that Jewish interpreter of dreams.

God hath showed thee all this — He could not but see that in all that he had heard from the lips of Joseph there

was more than human wisdom, and he does not hesitate in giving all glory to God. "Who [God] in times past . . . left not Himself without witness, . . . that they should seek the Lord." Acts 14, 17; 17, 27.

Over my house, etc. — Pharaoh made Joseph his Prime Minister, or vice-regent. "It was a long step from prison to the highest office in the gift of the king."

Only in the throne, etc. — The royal prerogatives were the only thing Pharaoh did not give up. In every other sense Joseph was the ruler of all Egypt.

Took off his ring, etc. — He gave Joseph "the insignia of his exalted office: the seal-ring to affix to the royal decrees, the fine white byssus (the finest, very costly linen) robe, and the gold chain as a special mark of royal favor." See Esther 8, 15. — The ring was of heavy gold, "having the sacred beetle (worshiped by the Egyptians) and mystic words engraved upon a large, precious stone." — The Egyptian byssus was as transparent as lawn and as fine as silk and therefore called "woven air." It was extremely soft and of dazzling whiteness. Only men of the highest rank were allowed to wear it. — Ancient gold chains, or necklaces, have been discovered in Egypt which are of such exquisite workmanship that patterns of them have been copied for our modern jewelers.

Second chariot — The second best royal chariot. Joseph was taken through the streets of the royal city in solemn procession. — "The Egyptian chariot was an almost semicircular wooden frame with straightened sides, resting posteriorly on the axle of a pair of wheels, a rail of wood or ivory being attached to the frame by leathern thongs, and a wooden upright in front. The back of the car was open, and the sides were strengthened and embellished with leather and metal binding. The floor was of rope network to give a springy footing to the occupants. . . . The wheels usually had six spokes, fastened to the axle by a linch-pin, secured by a thong. The horses had a breastband and girths attached to the saddle, but were without traces. They wore head-furniture, often ornamented with a bearing-rein. The

driving-reins passed through rings on each side of both horses. Two persons generally were in a chariot, but there was sometimes a third, holding the umbrella of state." (Wilkinson, *Ancient Egypt.*)

Bow the knee — All Egypt was to show him the marks of respect and reverence due the highest officer of state. "It is still the custom in many Eastern [Oriental] nations for subjects to kneel before the throne of the king and bow their heads slowly till they touch the earth."

Gave him to wife Asenath — As her father was the (heathen) high priest of the country, who ranked next to Pharaoh, this was another high honor bestowed upon him. Though this distinction particularly was a great temptation to forsake the true God, Joseph nevertheless remained faithful. (First Commandment.) Indeed, there is good reason to believe that through him the king and many high dignitaries learned to know the living God and turned to Him in sincere faith.

On — Heliopolis, the "City of the Sun," about six miles northeast of modern Cairo; called Bethshemesh in the Bible, *e. g.,* Jer. 43, 13. (Map 2.)

Food — Wheat. He gathered the fifth part of the harvest, which was the tax each subject had to pay the king. — Thriftiness. See John 6, 12.

He left numbering — Although the Egyptians had special officers in charge of such numbering, the amount reached the incalculable.

Two sons — Manasseh = "Forgetting." The fact that the Lord had given him a child made him forget the tribulation he had endured. — Ephraim = "Double Fruitfulness." "For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." Gen. 41, 52. — Thankful for God's gifts. (Cat., Qu. 124.)

Dearth — Scarcity, famine.

Cried for bread — Grain.

What he saith to you, do — See John 2, 5.

All countries — People from all the surrounding countries.

Catechism: Qu. 40. Seventh Commandment, Qu. 61. Fourth Petition.

Hymns: 498, 5—7; 525, 10. 11; 65, 11; 516, 1. 2.

Bible Readings: Ps. 105, 16—24; Prov. 3, 1—12; Rom. 11, 33—36.

Annotational Matter.

The *Nile* (meaning "Blue, Dark"), the great river of Egypt, probably the second longest river in the world, its entire length being estimated at 4,000 miles, divides that country into two sections. As rain seldom falls in Egypt proper, the fertility of the country is entirely dependent upon the annual rise of the Nile. This rise is due to heavy tropical rains falling from May to September in Ethiopia and all the countries whose streams empty into the Nile. The rise of the Nile generally begins in June. The water sometimes takes on a greenish or yellowish color, or even gets a reddish hue and becomes undrinkable. In August the river begins to overflow its banks, attaining its greatest height in September or October. "Formerly this annual inundation turned Egypt into a vast lake, but in later times the water has been distributed by a great network of canals, from which the huge basins of cultivated land into which the canals divide the country are supplied with water of the depth required to leave a deposit of mud to fertilize the land. The native uses his feet to regulate the flow of water into each of the squares or basins of land, and by a dexterous movement of his toes forms or removes a tiny embankment, as may be required to admit the proper flow of water. Another common mode is to use the 'shadoof,' a bucket attached to a long pole hung on a pivot, balanced by a stone or a lump of clay at one end, and having the bucket on the other end. To this day the Nile is lined for hundreds of miles with these shadoofs, worked by men, women, and children, who lift the water out of the river to irrigate their fields. Both these methods are believed to be very ancient, and may be alluded to by Moses in contrasting the fountains and rainfalls in Palestine with the absence of this supply in Egypt, Deut. 11, 10. 11." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) — "The height of the inundation most favorable for agriculture at the present day has been ascertained by long observation to be 23 cubits 2 inches, *i. e.*, about 41 feet 2 inches, while in the time of Herodotus 16 cubits sufficed, and the god of the Nile in the Vatican is therefore represented as surrounded by sixteen children. A single cubit more is apt to

cause terrible devastation in the Delta and elsewhere to cover the fields destined for the autumn crop, while a deficiency of 2 cubits causes drought and famine in Upper Egypt." (Baedeker, *Lower Egypt.*) — The ancient Egyptians worshiped the river Nile as a god.

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19. Joseph's Brethren Go to Egypt.

The great famine spread beyond the confines of Egypt, being felt in all the countries round about, also in Canaan, where Jacob and his family were living. It was the means, in the wise government of God, of fulfilling Joseph's dream and the word of the Lord spoken to Abraham: "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs . . . four hundred years." Gen. 15, 13.

The Journey of Joseph's Brothers.

Corn — grain.

Get you down — "Down," because Canaan is a highland, while Egypt is a lowland country. (Map 2.)

Not die — It was a most distressing famine. Starvation stared them in the face.

Ten brethren — Jacob would not allow Benjamin, the only child of his favorite wife Rachel that was still left him, to accompany his brothers. — Benjamin was now about twenty-four years old.

Bowed down themselves — Now Joseph's dreams were being fulfilled.

Made himself strange — Acted like a stranger, or foreigner, toward them and spoke to them through an interpreter.

Spake roughly — Not from a feeling of revenge, but to try them and, probably also, the better to hide his identity.

Knew not him — When the ten brothers sold Joseph into slavery, they had reached the age of manhood and consequently had changed very little, and wore their shepherds' attire, so that Joseph readily recognized them, while Joseph, being younger, had changed much more; besides, he was dressed like an Egyptian prince and talked Egyptian in their presence.

Spies — You have been sent by the king of some strange country to explore this country, and will tell him where he may most successfully attempt an invasion with his army. — Spies, when caught, are punished by death.

Nakedness — Openness, exposure to the attacks or invasion of an enemy.

Thy servants — A term of reverent courtesy.

True men — We are truthful, honest, reliable.

We are twelve brethren — If we were spies, our father would not have sent so many of his sons on such a dangerous expedition.

One is not — He is dead or has disappeared. They do not care to say much about that brother and how he suddenly "disappeared."

Proved — I want to find out for myself whether you are telling the truth or not.

Your youngest brother — He is anxious to learn how his brother Benjamin is faring.

Put them into ward — Had them thrown into prison to give them time for reflection. — "Ward" = confinement under guard.

One of your brethren be bound — At first he had said that one of their number should go home while the rest were to remain in prison; now he mitigates the punishment by offering to allow nine to go home while only one should be confined in prison. He did not want to withhold the sorely needed food from his father and his household.

I fear God — Therefore I shall not treat you unjustly or tyrannically. Prove to me that you are innocent, and you will no longer be molested.

Your words be verified — It will prove to me that you spoke the truth.

We are verily guilty — In the hour of great distress the memory of their great sin overwhelms them and makes them penitent.

Anguish — Agony. Imagine Joseph's state of mind when he was sold as a slave and was to be taken into a strange

country, far from home. — "This distress" of theirs, they meant to say, was a well-deserved punishment for having caused such anguish to their brother.

Besought — When Joseph begged, implored them not to treat him thus.

Interpreter — One who translated the Egyptian language into their mother tongue, and *vice versa.*

He turned . . . and wept — No longer able to restrain his emotions as he had understood every word they had spoken among themselves. The fact that his brothers repented of their wicked deed touched his heart.

Bound Simeon — Reuben, the oldest brother, had tried to save him from a cruel fate years ago, and so he kept the second oldest, Simeon, as hostage. He had him "bound," put in chains.

Nine Brothers Return Home.

Restore every man's money — A loving and forgiving brother! Nor would he take money from his father.

Befell unto them — What had happened to them on their journey and particularly in Egypt. — They all found the money they had taken with them in their sacks.

Were afraid — Lest this was a trap set for them to show that they were not "true men," but bad characters and hence — spies!

Mischief — Harm, injury.

My gray hairs — The grief would kill me, and you would be to blame. — A most pathetic scene — the gray-haired patriarch in utter distress of soul!

Catechism: "What sins should we confess?" The ten brothers confessed their sins to God, but not as yet to their father. — Fifth Petition. Fifth Commandment, Qu. 48.

Hymns: 65, 10; 415, 1. 2; 421, 1—3.

Bible Readings: Ps. 25, 1—15; Jer. 3, 12—25.

20. Second Journey of Joseph's Brethren.

Jacob's family being quite numerous (sixty-six members), they needed no small amount of food for themselves and their cattle. No wonder, then, that the grain which had been brought from Egypt was consumed in a short time. Though Jacob was very loath to let Benjamin go with his other sons, the sore distress in which they were compelled him to do so.

Benjamin Accompanies His Brothers to Egypt.

Did solemnly protest — Declared firmly and unmistakably.

Judah said — He and Reuben had a freer conscience than the rest of the brothers. He voiced a strong and convincing plea.

Not see my face — Do not dare to show your faces again and ask for corn unless you have Benjamin with you!

Wherefore dealt ye so ill — His distress made him speak rather unreasonably.

Surety — I shall answer for him; I herewith pledge my life for his safe return.

Of the best fruits — Notwithstanding the famine, on account of which the grain harvest was an utter failure, spices, nuts, etc., still grew to some extent. Probably it came to his mind again how much the present he sent to Esau years ago did toward softening his heart.

Double money — "Literally, *money of a second* (that is, of the same) *amount:* not twice as much as the first time, but simply as much as the first time." (*Pulpit Commentary.*)

Give you mercy — Incline that powerful man's heart to act kindly towards you. He dismissed his sons with a blessing.

If I be bereaved — Another note of despair. For many weeks he would be left in suspense as to the fate of his sons, especially Benjamin.

A Gracious Reception.

Ruler of his house — The manager of all his estates and the overseer of his servants.

Dine with me — Instead of a rude reception, as at their first presentation to the second highest man of the realm,

the brothers were given a kind welcome. They were even to dine with him at his palace.

They were afraid — They did not trust appearances; they were suspicious.

Fall upon us — He and his servants would overpower them as soon as he had them in the banquet-room.

Take us for bondmen — Make them his slaves.

Steward — The manager of Joseph's household.

I had your money — The money you owed for the grain you bought the first time was given me (by Joseph). He reassured them that no harm would come to them.

Brought Simeon — Another assurance that their fears were groundless.

Is he yet alive? — How anxious he was to learn all he could about his aged father! A loving son. (Fourth Commandment.)

JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN.

Younger brother — Youngest.

My son — An act of kind condescension. — Joseph was sixteen years older than Benjamin, who was only an infant when Joseph saw him last.

His bowels did yearn — His joy at seeing his brother Benjamin was so great that he burst out into tears of joy. — The bowels were believed by the ancients to be the seat of tender emotions, just as we now speak of the heart.

Chamber — Private room.

Refrained himself — Held his emotions in check.

Abomination — The Egyptians feared contamination from mingling with other nations, especially with the Hebrews, who were shepherds. Having formerly been oppressed by shepherd kings, they hated all who were engaged in stock-raising. "All this was part of the divine plan for the separation of the Hebrew people."

Marveled — They were greatly astonished at being given their seats at table according to their respective ages.

Five times as much — This was done, not only because Joseph wished to show his great affection for Benjamin, but

also because he was anxious to learn whether they were now free from that spirit of envy which prompted them to such a criminal act against him.

Catechism: Sum of Second Table and Fourth Commandment.

Hymns: 247, 7; 249, 3; 252, 7.

Bible Readings: Rom. 12, 17—21; 1 John 4, 7—21.

Annotational Matter.

The ancient Egyptians are described as temperate, abstinent, serious, even gloomy people, but of an inventive bent; good-natured to the extreme of cringing servility over against superiors. They thought little of this life. They clung to their religious customs and tenets with great tenacity. — The prevailing opinion is that the ancient Egyptians were of Asiatic, not of African, origin. In prehistoric times a certain people, emigrating from Asia Minor, settled in Egypt, forming priest colonies, and holding subject the aborigines, who were of Hamitic descent (Negro race). The colonies were independent of each other. Each colony was ruled by a priest-king (Pharaoh), as substitute of the sun-god, until, at a later period, the entire country became subject to *one* Pharaoh. — "The progress of the Egyptians in the various sciences was equaled by that of no other people except the Greeks, and perhaps the Babylonians and Assyrians. In astronomy, geometry, chemistry, and the arts their knowledge is attested by the cycles they formed for the adjustment of different reckonings of time, and by their skill in shaping and moving vast blocks of stone used in building which . . . are an enigma to modern engineers. . . . In medicine also they were inferior only to the Greeks." The science of astronomy was highly developed, as was also that of mathematics, including surveying. Already at the time of the patriarchs they had a well-established civil government. — The people were divided into *castes*, of which there were four originally, but finally seven: priests, warriors, tillers of the soil, tradesmen, navigators, interpreters, and swine-herds (the most despised caste). At first the kings were chosen from the caste of priests, later from the warrior-caste. The priests, who were the patrons of the arts and sciences, were the only ones who were able to read and write. There were two kinds of writing — the hieroglyphic signs, partly pictorial, partly phonetic, and the

shorter hieratic, a running hand, or common written form of the hieroglyphic, principally used for documents written on papyrus. The art of deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphics was learned as late as the last century.

The *religion* of the Egyptians in the earliest times was principally a worship of the heavenly bodies. The sun-god, *Osiris*, and his wife *Isis*, the goddess of the moon, were universally worshiped. Besides these the Egyptians worshiped various animals — the crocodile, the ichneumon (or, Pharaoh's rat), the cat, the fitchet (pole cat), the sparrow-hawk, and others. At Memphis there was a bull-god, called *Apis*, whom the people worshiped because it was said that his body was the habitation of the soul of the god Osiris. "Every town had its local divinities and its sacred animal or fetish. . . . The worship of these gods required priests, sacrifices, offerings of fruits, libations, and at some early periods human victims. Vast temples were built in honor of the deities, each town usually having at least one temple." — The Egyptians believed in the *transmigration of the soul*. After a migration, lasting three thousand years, through the bodies of animals the soul would be permitted to return to its original habitation. It was this belief that was responsible for the custom of embalming the bodies of their dead with *mum* (whence the name "mummies"), and for this reason, too, they were very anxious to provide a good burial-place for the dead. They built immense *tombs* with almost numberless caves, passages, halls, and chambers in which the mummies were placed. The great *City of the Dead at Thebes*, tombs built on a grand scale, was the burial-place of even the kings of that famous city. The kings of an earlier period built the well-known *pyramids*, which served the same purpose as the tombs. Each king, on ascending the throne, would at once begin the building of a pyramid, adding layer upon layer of huge blocks, until, at his burial, the entrance was closed, and the monumental burial structure finished. The Cheops Pyramid (built about 2300 B. C.), the highest pyramid ever erected, is still, in its present condition, 450 feet high. 100,000 men are said to have worked thirty years to finish that colossal royal tomb. The pyramids at Memphis, built about 2000 B. C., are the oldest known monuments extant. The most remarkable tomb-structure is the famous *Labyrinth*, in the Fayoum district, in Upper Egypt, which Bunsen calls the most gorgeous edifice in the world; it includes 12 palaces and 3,000 saloons, or apartments. Other remarkable structures are the

obelisks, tall pointed pillars, huge granite blocks, from 50 to 200 feet in height. They are mostly covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions, and probably were intended as ornaments in front of temples and royal palaces. The *sphinxes*, with the body of a lion, but the head of a man or a ram, undoubtedly served the same purpose. Near the group of pyramids at Cairo there is a sphinx hewn out of one solid granite block, 150 feet long and 65 feet high, though now it projects only 21 feet from the sand. From the temple at Karnak to that at Luxor (the site of ancient Thebes, 540 miles from Cairo) an avenue was built lined by 600 gigantic sphinxes, called "Avenue of Sphinxes."

About 2000 B. C. foreign conquerors, called Hyksos (shepherd kings, supposed to have been of Semitic origin), came to Egypt in great numbers. They came "out of the eastern parts; some say that these people were Arabians," as Manetho, an Egyptian historian (third century B. C.), writes. They gradually took possession of Lower Egypt, and adopted the manners and customs of the land, their kings even assuming the royal titles of the Pharaohs. Theirs was a stern and even despotic rule. It was during the reign of this dynasty that the house of Jacob came to Egypt. In the days of Moses, about four hundred years later, the tyrannical Hyksos had been driven out of the country by a new dynasty "which knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1, 8), and whose seat of government was Thebes. Having grown mighty, they began to oppress the children of Israel, as recorded by Moses in Exodus.

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21. Joseph Makes Himself Known.

Joseph had convinced himself that his brothers had not done external violence to Benjamin as they had done to him, but he desires to be finally assured that the hardness of heart and want of feeling which had formerly plunged their father into the deepest grief for his child had now passed away, and that they would not commit a similar deed against Benjamin. (*Delitzsch.*)

The Last Test.

My silver cup — Probably an exquisitely engraved wine-bowl, similar to the royal bowl of Pharaoh.

In the sack's mouth of the youngest — So that, as soon as the "theft" would be disclosed, Joseph would be justified in

claiming Benjamin as his prisoner. A very clever way of finding out what attitude the brothers would take towards their brother.

Evil for good — To commit such a base theft after having been treated so honorably, yea, royally!

In which my lord drinketh — The cup that he values so highly.

God forbid — It was evident that the conscience of each and every one was clear.

Behold, the money — How could men that had shown their honesty in such a manner be suspected of a theft such as they were charged with!

Let him die — The strongest proof of their innocence.

Servant — Slave, never to return to his father.

Blameless — Considered innocent and therefore permitted to return to Canaan.

Rent their clothes — Their outer garments — in great consternation and speechless with fright.

The Brothers Stand the Test.

Judah said — Because he had made that solemn promise to his father, he acted as spokesman.

Found out the iniquity — God is punishing us for the evil deeds we have committed. All their former sins stood before them, as it were, in frightening array.

Came near unto him — Rising from his prostrate position. This is one of the most touching scenes recorded in the Old Testament. — Judah's pitiful plea did not fail to touch Joseph's heart.

Bound up — Since he suffered the loss of the son we told you about, his whole soul is wrapped up in his youngest son.

Lad — Benjamin was much younger than the ten brothers. He was about twenty-four years old. — It was just what Joseph wished to see. — This was the crisis, the turning-point, in the history of the patriarch's family.

Let me abide . . . a bondman — The supreme test of Judah's love for his brother Benjamin — he offered to become that stern ruler of Egypt's slave in his place! Now Joseph

knew all that he desired to know. (A faint picture of what Christ did for us — He became a "bondman," a curse, for us! Gal. 3, 13.) "What would I not give to be able to pray before the Lord as Judah here interceded for Benjamin: for it is a perfect model of prayer, nay, of the strong feeling which must underlie all prayer." (*Luther.*)

RECOGNITION — FORGIVENESS.

Could not refrain himself — Could no longer control his feelings.

Every man to go out — The scene which was to follow was too sacred to have strangers, and heathen at that, witness it. — "I do not doubt that Joseph trembled in his whole body while Judah brought forth his plea, and his heart was extremely touched. . . . Every word must have pierced his heart." (*Luther.*)

I am Joseph! — These words, no doubt, were spoken in Hebrew. What a revelation! The effect of these words was stunning.

Your brother — There was great reassurance in the announcement that he still wished to be regarded as their brother.

Troubled at his presence — They were beside themselves with consternation.

Could not answer him — Joseph's words had come as a sudden blow, from which they could not so easily recover.

Come near to me — They had up to this moment stood aloof from him in reverent fear.

Be not grieved — Let your minds be at ease about what you did twenty-two years ago. It has all been forgiven. (Cat., Qu. 48: "forgiving"; Rom. 12, 20: "coals of fire"; Qu. 252; Matt. 5, 24: "reconciled.")

God did send me before you — In the good government of God your evil deed turned out for the welfare of our entire family.

Ruler throughout all Egypt — Viceroy, acting ruler.

All my glory — This was not said in a spirit of pride,

but merely to assure his father that he could carry out his promise.

Nourish thee — Supply you with all that you need. I can do it, and I will do it. "Ye shall eat of the fat of the land."

Haste ye — He longed to see his aged father as soon as possible.

Fell upon . . . Benjamin's neck — How long had he been compelled to restrain his feelings!

Kissed all his brethren — Now they could not but believe that he was fully reconciled to them; Joseph was repaying good for evil with a truly loving heart. (Cat., Qu. 252: "*heartily* forgive.")

Pharaoh's Kindness.

Come unto me — He was grateful for the blessings bestowed upon him and his country through Joseph. — Pharaoh unwittingly had to carry out God's design; for the Lord had told Abraham that his descendants would live in Egypt four hundred years. The destinies of all, especially of God's people, are in His hand.

Regard not your stuff — Never mind such of your personal property as you can neither sell nor take with you.

The good of the land — Pharaoh permitted Jacob and his family to settle in the rich province of Goshen, which was well adapted for herding and stock-raising purposes. — This, too, was done under the good providence of God. Jacob's descendants were not to mingle and intermarry with the Egyptians, but to remain a separate (a "peculiar") people.

Many good things — "Probably rich clothing, jewels, ivory, etc." See Gen. 45, 21—23. Among the "good things" were "changes of raiment," new garments, which undoubtedly they were in great need of, as money was scarce during those years of famine. Benjamin, Joseph's full brother, received five changes of raiment and, besides, three hundred pieces of silver, which had the purchasing power of about $2,000 in our money.

Fall not out by the way — A very necessary admonition! For instance, no one should try to put the blame upon another one regarding the treatment they had given him years ago. He had forgiven them, and now they should let bygones be bygones.

Catechism: Fifth Petition: Qu. 252.
Hymns: 260, 3; 339, 1—3; 391, 6.
Bible Readings: Rom. 12, 17—21; 1 Pet. 3, 8—17.

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22. Jacob in Egypt. Gen. 45-50

After years of grief and sorrow the old patriarch Jacob was again to bask in the sun of divine temporal blessing. He was to see his long-lost son, the idol of his affections, who had risen to heights never dreamed of. He and his family were to find a good home in a province of Egypt and be well provided for. There he was to pronounce his remarkable farewell blessings and depart this life in peace and with a happy prophetic look into the future.

Meeting of Father and Son.

Joseph is yet alive — How the hearts of Jacob's sons must have beaten when these words passed their lips! What a shameful falsehood they had told their father after they had sold Joseph into slavery!

Jacob's heart fainted — The unexpected news produced a shock. It was "too good to be true"; he could not believe it, and therefore his heart almost died within him. 1 Sam. 25, 37.

They told him all the words — We may take it for granted that they now confessed their evil deed of twenty-two years ago. (The second or third year of the famine. Joseph was about thirty-nine years of age.) It was the best imaginable time to make a full confession. The old father could not but forgive them now.

When he saw the wagons — Seeing was believing. The elegant vehicles from the royal wain-house, — such wagons

were unknown in Palestine, — the fine garments, the princely money-gift with which he had gladdened the heart of Benjamin, convinced Jacob that his sons were telling him the truth. And there was Benjamin, whose joy was too genuine to give the lie to the *wonderful* story he had to tell.

The spirit of Jacob revived — Brought back to life, as it were. He took a new lease of life, so to say. He slowly realized that it was true indeed what he had just heard.

I will go — He had but one desire — to see him whom he had believed to be dead. He was overcome with joy.

Offered sacrifices — Thank-offerings to the God of his fathers for His goodness. (Cat., Qu. 28; Ps. 103, 1; 118, 1.)

God spake unto him — He was so well pleased with Jacob's thank-offering that He renewed His promises of former years in a dream-vision and also gave him new promises: 1) He would protect him on his journey to Egypt; 2) He would multiply his family exceedingly ("great nation"); 3) He would bring him, *i. e.*, his descendants, "up again," to Canaan, in His appointed time; 4) his favorite son would be at his death-bed ("put his hands upon thine eyes").

All the souls of the house of Jacob — "In addition to the twelve sons of Jacob, who were the founders of the twelve tribes, all those grandsons and great-grandsons are listed who became the ancestors of independent families. . . . In the account of Stephen, Acts 7, 14, three grandsons and great-grandsons of Joseph are included." (*Pop. Com.*) — In all, there were about two hundred and fifty persons. Asses were loaded with household goods. Some of the men rode on camels, many walked, and Jacob and the women rode in the wagons sent by Joseph. Each night they slept on the ground.

He sent Judah before him — To be the spokesman. He had shown his talents in that respect and achieved great success. (David and Solomon, his descendants, reached the acme.)

Joseph made ready his chariot — He could not wait

until his father arrived at the place of destination: he must go to meet him. (Fourth Commandment.)

Fell on his neck — What a jubilant meeting after a separation of twenty-two years! (Reunion in heaven.)

Jacob Before Pharaoh.

In the land of Goshen — Pharaoh repeated his kind offer of some weeks previous. Goshen lay east of the river Nile. The soil was — and is to-day — very fertile, and the country abounds in excellent pasturages. Rameses was the capital. (Map 2.)

Joseph brought Jacob . . . before Pharaoh — The mighty prince was not ashamed to present his old father, a plain shepherd, to the mighty ruler of Egypt. (Cat., Qu. 44; Prov. 23, 22. He did not "despise" his aged, plain, rustic-clad father.)

My pilgrimage — He speaks of his life as a pilgrimage to a better land — heaven. (Hymn 563.)

Not attained, etc. — Abraham attained the age of 175, and Isaac was 180 years old when he died. Jacob felt that he would not reach such a high age.

Jacob blessed Pharaoh — That aged shepherd of despised Canaan was able to give that mighty monarch something that was worth more than all his wealth and worldly power — the blessing of the living God! What a grand picture!

Nourished his father — Supported him.

Seventeen years — Dying at the age of 147 years.

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons.

Bury me not in Egypt — He firmly believed the divine promises regarding the future history of his descendants. Gen. 35, 12. Joseph was to bury him in the cave which Abraham had bought in Machpelah. Gen. 23.

Manasseh and Ephraim — Jacob adopted these two sons of Joseph as his own sons, with privileges equal to those of his own, thus making them heads of distinct tribes. Gen. 48, 16: "Let my name be named on them," etc. He treated Joseph, the elder of the two sons whom Rachel bore

him, as though he were his first-born (probably he regarded Rachel as his true wife) and consequently gave him a double portion. No tribe of the children of Israel was called after Joseph, but two tribes after his two sons. (The blessing of the Fourth Commandment came upon Joseph and his posterity.)

Swear unto me — This swearing was demanded by the glory of God. (See Cat., Qu. 25.)

God . . . bless the lads — He was overjoyed at seeing them once more. Gen. 48, 10. — He blessed the two grandsons in the name of the Son of God, the promised Messiah; see Gen. 48, 16: "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil bless the lads." (*NB.* The teacher should not fail to point out to his pupils time and again that the children of God in the Old Testament were saved "through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" [Acts 15, 11; John 8, 56], the same as we Christians of the New Testament.)

God shall be with you — Joseph and all his children were ever to keep in mind this great promise of God.

Jacob Blesses His Own Sons.

Blessed his sons — The subsequent history of Israel shows that the prophetic blessings which Jacob pronounced upon his sons came true. The Spirit of God moved him to speak those words of blessing. See Gen. 49, 3—27.

Judah, Thou art he, etc. — Judah received the greatest and richest blessings. 1) *Temporal* blessing: He would be the leader of Israel. Judah formed the vanguard during the wilderness journey; David and Solomon, his descendants, ruled over all Israel and, besides, over other nations, David having subdued them. Judah's leadership ("scepter") was to extend to the days of the Messiah. 2) *Spiritual* blessings: The Messiah (Shiloh = Prince of Peace, Is. 9, 6) was to be descended from Judah, He who would bring peace, the peace with God, to all mankind, and who would gather people of all nations into His spiritual kingdom through that great message of peace, the Gospel.

I have waited for Thy salvation — In the midst of his

prophecy Jacob gave utterance to the blessed hope that was within him, the hope of eternal salvation to be merited by the Redeemer, and he longed for the hour of his departure and the bliss of heaven. (Simeon, Luke 2, 29. 30. Third Article: "I believe in the life everlasting"; "give unto me . . . eternal life.")

Gathered unto his people — To his forefathers, who, like him, had "waited for the Lord's salvation."

Joseph . . . wept upon him — Joseph's mourning over the death of his father is mentioned especially; he felt the loss still more than his brothers. A dutiful and loving son! (Fourth Commandment.) — "Deep mourning was to last for seven days, of which the first three were those of weeping. During these seven days it was, among other things, forbidden to wash, to anoint oneself, to put on shoes, to study, or to engage in any business. After that followed a lighter mourning of thirty days. Children were to mourn for their parents a whole year. . . . The anniversary of the day of death was also to be observed." (*Edersheim.*)

Threescore and ten days — According him the same honor as princes of their country.

Embalm his father — (See "Annotational Matter," p. 102.)

Buried Jacob — They complied with the last will of their father. Even many Egyptians went with them. Gen. 50, 7—11.

Joseph's Renewed Assurance of Forgiveness.

Requite us all the evil — Now that the father was dead, they feared Joseph would punish them for their evil deeds.

Forgive — Probably they had not until now formally asked Joseph's forgiveness. They made a full confession. (Cat., Qu. 48; Matt. 5, 25.)

Joseph wept — It pained him to think that his brothers expressed such a fear after all he had said and done. However, it also affected him to see that his brothers gave unmistakable evidence of true repentance.

Am I in the place of God? — He wished to say what St. Paul expressed thus (Rom. 12, 19): "It is written,

Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Cat., Qu. 47.)

God meant it unto good — Yours was a very evil design when you sold me into slavery; but the loving God knew how to turn what seemed to bring me utter misery into blessings for myself and for you, — indeed, also for many other people. (Cat., Qu. 120. 122. The providence of God.)

Comforted them — A model preacher: the Gospel to terrified sinners. (Cat., Qu. 101, § 5.)

Joseph's Tomb near Shechem.

Spake kindly unto them — He truly "forgave from his heart" (Matt. 18, 35) and "did good unto them" that had "hated him" (Matt. 5, 44). A fine example for us to follow!

Carry up my bones — Joseph, too, confessed his firm belief in the divine promises given to Abraham, etc., and therefore wanted to be buried in the Land of Promise. — Josh. 24, 32 the burial of Joseph's bones in Canaan, near Shechem, is recorded.

Coffin — Coffins were used in Egypt, but not in Canaan, except when a body was to be conveyed to a distant place. They were made of sycamore-wood, which is both light and extremely durable.

Catechism: Fourth Commandment ("hold them in love and esteem"); First Article (God's providence); Third Article ("resurrection of the body"); Fifth Petition, Qu. 252. 316.

Hymns: 292; 17; 394, 1; 535, 1; 346, 6. 7; 559.

Bible Readings: Ps. 66, 8—15; 105, 1—24; Job 14, 1—12; Heb. 4, 9—13; 1 Pet. 4, 12—19.

Annotational Matter.

Gen. 50 tells us that both Jacob's and Joseph's bodies were embalmed after their death. In the preceding paragraph we learned that the Egyptians observed the custom of embalming their dead. The process, in its simplest form, consisted in desiccation (removal of all moisture from the corpse), little or no wrappings, and a slight smearing with pitch. Where more elaborate methods were employed, aromatics and antiseptics were applied in addition to desiccation. These aromatics were found in natron beds. In the application of natron a strong brine was made, in which the body was soaked, sometimes as long as seventy days. The abdominal viscera were often removed, and sometimes preserved separately, or, after preservation, returned to the outside or inside of the body. The cavities of the body were then filled with the aromatics, cedar-wood dust, and dry earth. The body was finally wrapped in strips of linen cloth. The wrapped and dried mummy was placed in one or more cases, or coffins, and then in perfectly dry catacombs, or tombs. Egyptian mummies may be seen to this day. The color of the mummies is brown, the body is as hard and dry as wood, and the aromatics have penetrated the wrappings to such an extent that the latter seem to belong to the body proper.

It will be of interest to the teacher, in this connection, to read a description of the golden-faced coffin of Tutankhamen, a ruler of Egypt 3,200 years ago.

After the wall separating the sepulchral chamber from the rest of the tomb had been broken down, the excavators raised the great stone slab of the sarcophagus. This raising of the slab provided them with a thrill surpassing their expectations. Covering the coffin case was a pall consisting of three thicknesses of a brown material; when this had been rolled back, the full beauty of the coffin was revealed. The excavators found the main fabric of the coffin to be wood, but it was entirely sheeted over with solid gold

and was a most remarkable sight. It fulfils the double purpose of coffin and portrait statue of the Pharaoh, conceived with superb taste. The whole surface of the coffin is in bold relief and is obviously a work of the highest order; for the full sensitive mouth and the small refined nose are exquisitely modeled. The eyes are set in with semiprecious stones. The whole face, which is three times life-size, conveys an impression of serenity and dignity. The face is typically youthful, and the sovereign is depicted lying in state with his regalia, wearing the golden crown with the hawkhead and serpent encrusted in lapis lazuli about his brow. These are encircled with a chaplet of natural flowers, black and brittle with age. The arms are folded across the breast, the right hand clasping the crook of the scepter, which is about four feet long, apparently of wood, decorated with gold and semiprecious stones. The left hand holds the golden flail, the symbol of power. Beneath the folded arms in the center of the body there is a short lengthwise band of inscriptions introducing the king's cartouches. The coffin is about ten feet long, and appears completely to fill the sarcophagus. The outstanding relief of the head and shoulders gives the figure an appearance of a slight tilt forward.

23. Job.

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous," says David, Ps. 34, 19. In Acts 14, 22 we learn that the children of God "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Heb. 12, 6 we are told: "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." God's people, therefore, must "both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Lam. 3, 26. And when His hour has come, He delivers them out of all tribulation and grants them days of rejoicing.

Job's Family and His Great Wealth.

Uz — First mentioned Gen. 10, 23. Probably that portion of the Arabian Desert east of Edom, extending indefinitely toward the Euphrates. Lam. 4, 21. (Map 1.)

Job — Meaning, "One persecuted." Other references in the Bible to Job: Ezek. 14, 14. 18. 20; Jas. 5, 11. It is impossible to state with any degree of accuracy when Job

lived; however, we have reason to conjecture that it was about at the time of the Exodus.

Feared God — The Lord Himself bore testimony to this fact over against Satan. Chap. 3, 3. Other evidences: He blessed the name of the Lord (chap. 1, 21) after the great affliction recorded in the first chapter; he reproved his wife for suggesting to him to fall away from God, chap. 2, 10; he "eschewed [avoided] evil" and was diligent in good works, chap. 29, 15. 16; 31 (entire chapter); and yet he did not build his hope of salvation on his godly life, but acknowledged his sinfulness, chap. 7, 20; 9, 2. 3. 14. 20; 14, 4; and therefore put his trust solely in the promised Redeemer, chap. 19, 25. 26. (Cat., Qu. 90, combined with Second and Third Articles.)

Seven sons . . . three daughters - He had a large family, which in those days was considered a great divine blessing.

His substance (material possessions) — The Lord had given him great wealth. He was "the greatest of all the men of the East" (east of Canaan: Arabia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia), chap. 1, 3; the most famous and most respected of all the rulers in those countries. He also had a great reputation for wisdom (wise sayings and great statesmanship). See chap. 29.

His sons feasted — Each one of the seven sons was in the habit of celebrating a certain day, probably birthday ("every one his day"), by giving a family feast, to which all the brothers and sisters were invited. Job's children showed great affection for one another; they dwelt together in love and harmony. Ps. 133. (Cat., Qu. 36.)

Sanctified them . . . burnt offerings — On the morning following the day of feasting, Job had his sons and daughters come to his family altar, and after having prepared them for the sacred act of worship by calling upon them to acknowledge and confess their sins before God, he offered an animal for each of them upon his altar and implored the God of grace and mercy to forgive the sins of his children for the sake of Him who would offer Himself as a sacrifice for all mankind. — Another proof of Job's piety.

Satan's Accusation.

The sons of God — The holy angels.

To present themselves — To report, amid reverent shouts of praise (Is. 6, 3), how they had executed His last commands (Ps. 103, 20. 21) and to ask what they were to do next. (Cat., Qu. 114: "praise God . . . commands.")

Satan = "Adversary." Enemy of God and man. In this story he is pictured to us particularly as delighting in injuring and harming man in his body and inflicting temporal losses of every description. (Cat., Qu. 115; John 8, 44: "murderer.")

Coming to and fro — Satan walks about — prowls, roves, and wanders about stealthily, as a lion, seeking whom he may devour, bodily and spiritually. (Cat., Qu. 115; 1 Pet. 5, 8.)

None like him — The Lord gives Job the highest praise. Job was a paragon of piety. Ezek. 14, 16. 18. 20.

For naught — Satan wanted to make Job out to be a hypocrite. Day and night he is the accuser of God's children before God. Apoc. 12, 10; Zech. 3, 1. — He is rightly called also devil, *i. e.*, slanderer.

All that he hath is in thy power — God at times permits Satan to afflict His children for their soul's benefit. (Cat., Qu. 257.)

Upon himself put not forth thine hand — Satan cannot carry out his evil designs one whit beyond divine permission. (Cat., Qu. 115: "*endeavor* to destroy," etc.; not always successful; mighty, but not almighty.)

Job's Losses.

There was a day — One of those feast-days mentioned above.

Sabeans — Arabian hordes from Sheba, a country bordering on the Red Sea. (Map 1.)

Fire of God — A terrific electrical storm or (*Pop. Com.*) "a shower of fire and brimstone."

Chaldeans — Chaldea in those days was situated on both sides of the river Euphrates and bordered on the Persian Gulf. (Map 4.)

Great wind — Tornado, whirlwind.

Rent his mantle and shaved his head — With the Orientals, signs of deep grief and sorrow. — Job had sustained an extraordinarily heavy loss, and all in one day: 1) his oxen and mules; 2) his sheep; 3) his camels; 4) all his servants (slaves; farm-laborers, shepherds, and herdsmen); 5) by far the greatest bereavement: his ten children.

The Lord gave, etc. — Stricken Job possessed his soul in patience and acknowledged, with praises on his lips, that the Giver of all good gifts had a right to take from him everything that He had given him. (Cat., Qu. 239: "suffer according to His good pleasure." Hymn 501, 3.)

Satan's Second Accusation.

Considered Job — Hast thou observed how steadfast he remained in the great tribulation which has come over him?

Integrity — True piety.

All that a man hath — Again he traduces Job. He would like to see him suffer still more. Satan *delights* in harming man. *Schadenfreude.*

Spare his life — In order to test Job's faith, the Lord permitted Satan to cause him great bodily suffering. But again He limited his power.

Job's Affliction.

Sore boils — "The disease was the worst form of leprosy, with horrible ulcers or boils and a swollen condition of the joints, which rendered the afflicted person also helpless." (*Pop. Com.*)

Potsherd . . . scrape himself — The fact that he scraped his skin with a broken piece of pot shows how extremely the festering sores were itching him.

Sat down among the ashes — Sprinkling ashes on one's head indicates deep grief and misery of soul. — A great contrast — his former and his present condition!

Said his wife, . . . Curse God and die — To see his wife turn from him with blasphemy on her lips only added to Job's indescribable misery.

Shall we receive good — By earnestly reproaching his wife, he again showed his strong faith. A beautiful answer! (Hymn 501, 5.)

Not sin — Up to this point Job heroically withstood the temptation of Satan to murmur against God and cast his faith aside.

Job's Friends.

Knew him not — The leprosy had so disfigured him that his friends could hardly recognize him.

Wept — They showed their sympathy. Rom. 12, 15: "Weep with them that weep."

Cursed his day — The day of his birth. This was a great sin, but it was a sin of weakness. His suffering, grief, and general misery of body and soul were so great that they overpowered his senses and beclouded the vision of faith.

Eliphaz . . . innocent? — Similar to Satan, Eliphaz accuses Job of some evil deed, secretly committed, for which he was now being punished.

Happy is the man — This was a very fine saying of Eliphaz, which all children of God should take to heart. (Cat., Qu. 262; Heb. 12, 6.)

My brethren . . . as a brook — His friends were not friends in need, but were like a brook or creek which runs dry in the hot summer, so that the thirsty wanderer looks in vain for a refreshing draught in its bed.

Bildad . . . pervert justice? — Bildad wants to impress upon Job that God is just, and that therefore his sore affliction must be regarded as a well-deserved punishment. But he does not see that in the case of God's children, tribulation of whatsoever kind is the chastisement of a loving Father and meant for their temporal and eternal welfare.

Cannot answer Him one of a thousand — Another proof that, notwithstanding some words of Job that were sadly beside the mark, he was at heart, not self-righteous, but realized his sinfulness. (Cat., Qu. 195; Ps. 130, 3. 4.)

Zophar — He entertained the false opinion that a man — a sinner — could be perfect, wholly sinless, in this life, or

himself atone for his sins and then stand justified in the sight of God. (Like the Pharisees in the New Testament. Matt. 19, 20; Luke 18, 11. 12; etc.)

Miserable comforters — Job's three friends were without the proper knowledge of both the Law and the Gospel. They failed to see where Job principally sinned against God, and still less did they point him to God's grace and mercy in the Woman's Seed promised already in Paradise.

I know that my Redeemer liveth — The Holy Spirit opened Job's spiritual eyes when he was nigh to despairing, so that his faith broke forth in one of the most glorious words to be found in all Old Testament Scriptures. He had a most blessed faith, he said: though the worms will destroy his body in the bowels of the earth, his Redeemer will on Judgment Day ("at the Latter Day") appear visibly on earth and bring his body back to life, and body and soul, reunited, will see his God and Savior forevermore, in unending bliss and glory. (Second Article; Third Article: "resurrection of the body," etc. Hymn 220; 501, 8—12.)

Job Comforted.

The Lord answered Job — First the Lord reproved Job for having said various things that dishonored His holy name. (Sin against Second Commandment and First Petition.) He answered him "out of the whirlwind," to frighten and humble him and bring him to a realization of his sinful impatience and murmuring.

Job answered — He acknowledged and penitently confessed his sins ("I am vile" — "repent in dust and ashes"). Thereupon the Lord forgave him the iniquity of his sin. See Ps. 32, 5. (Fifth Petition. Fifth Chief Part: Confession.)

The Lord said to Eliphaz - The three friends of Job were admonished to repent because they had not spoken to Job about Him and His ways of dealing with His children as they should have done.

Accepted Job — He heard the intercessory prayer which He Himself had told Job to make for his friends. — Job an example for us. Jas. 5, 16. (Cat., Qu. 214.)

Turned the captivity of Job — Restored his health. During his sore affliction he had been, as it were, shut up in a prison ("captivity").

Blessed him . . . twice as much — Now even those who had passed judgment on him similarly to that of his false friends were constrained to admit that God was his Friend and loving Father, and that he was a true child of God.

Died, being old — He lived 140 years longer, thus dying at an old age, departing this life in the firm hope of a resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Catechism: Qu. 115; Second and Third Articles ("from thence He shall come" —"resurrection of the body"); Third, Sixth, and Seventh Petitions (submitting to God's will; temptations of Satan; deliverance from evil).

Hymns: 498, 5. 6; 501, 5; 507, 1; 516, 1. 2. 4; 62, 11—13; 515; 219.

Bible Readings: Job 38—41; 1 Pet. 5, 6—11; Heb. 12, 1—14.

Moses and Joshua.

(1571—1426 B. C.)

Jacob's family increased rapidly in Egypt. In the course of two hundred years they had grown to be a populous nation. But their lot had grown to be a most pitiable one. They had become slaves to a cruel tyrant. A liberator, however, stood up among them, who made a futile attempt at freeing his people from the yoke of bondage, futile, because he had trusted too much in his own powers, but who, after he had learned the lessons God wanted him to learn, no longer trusted in himself, being willing now to be led by God alone; and thus he was properly fitted to do the great work which God had destined him to perform — *Moses.* When God's hour had come, Moses led Israel out of Egypt, assumed the leadership, made a covenant with God on Mount Sinai in their name, and, after many struggles, brought the people within view of the Promised Land, which he himself was permitted to see only from a distance.

24. The Birth of Moses and His Flight.

Israel's Bondage. Ex 1-2

Increased abundantly — The erstwhile family of some seventy souls had become a nation. "The land was filled with them." Ex. 1, 7.

New king — A new dynasty of kings. About 215 years after Jacob had come to Egypt.

Knew not Joseph — This new line of kings may never have heard how great a benefactor Joseph had been to Egypt, and the people seem to have forgotten all about it.

His people — Particularly his councilors of state.

More and mightier than we — Which was saying too much. He wanted to frighten them into executing the bold measures which he had planned.

Deal wisely with them — Devise some scheme to decrease their numbers.

Taskmasters — Rigorous, cruel overseers.

Afflict them with burdens — They compelled them to overexert themselves; demanded more work than they could do. — They had to build "treasure-cities" (cities where the annual tax of grain exacted by the king was stored), temples, and pyramids for the king. Their life was a "hard bondage."

Multiplied and grew — The king's scheme miscarried because God wanted to save and multiply His elect nation. He broke the evil counsel and will of Satan and the world. (Cat., Qu. 240. Hymn 525, 4. 5.)

Cast into the river (Nile) — All the male issue was to be exterminated. This new measure of the king was to deprive the enslaved people of such as would be able to carry on warfare against him.

The Child Moses Rescued.

House of Levi — Tribe of Levi.

Amram = "People of the exalted." Nothing is known of him except that he was a descendant of Levi. But his children (Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) and many of his children's children (the high priests of Israel, a number

of whom were great men of God; in the New Testament: Zacharias and his great son, John the Baptist) were great lights in the Church of God. (Hans Luther — Martin Luther.)

Jochebed = "Whose glory is Jehovah." Of the two parents of Moses she seems to have had the stronger faith.

Hid him — Moses' parents knew that it was a sin to kill their child, and when they saw that it was a "goodly," a beautiful child, they felt assured that God would bless their efforts to keep him alive. They also knew God's promise: Gen. 15, 13; 50, 24.

Not longer hide him — The Egyptian spies scoured the whole country to find boy babies.

Ark of bulrushes — A small covered box or basket made of papyrus reeds.

Slime — Asphaltic substance for binding the reeds, which forms a hard, glossy wax, impervious to water.

Pitch — To render the chest water-tight.

In the flags (a species of reeds) — Where the chest could not float away. — The mother, no doubt, knew that Pharaoh's daughter was wont to bathe there. She hoped that she would thus be able to save the child's life. It was an act of faith on her part. Heb. 11, 23.

His sister — Miriam. There were three children: Miriam, Aaron, and Moses. Aaron was three years older than his brother.

Wash herself — Bathing in the waters of the Nile, as a supposedly sacred river, was part of a religious ceremony.

Her maidens — Attending slaves.

One of the Hebrews' children — Whose complexion was lighter than that of the Egyptian children.

Compassion — She felt pity for the crying infant.

Go — Notwithstanding the cruel command of her despotic father she was willing to save that little Hebrew child's life. — The Lord wanted this child to live, and He found this high protectress for it. (Cat., Qu. 120.)

Nurse it for me — Give it proper nourishment and educate it. Pharaoh's daughter became Moses' foster-mother.

The woman took the child — Imagine the joy of the mother to be permitted to nurse her child in spite of Pharaoh! — As soon as little Moses could be taught, his mother undoubtedly told him about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and about all the promises given to them. She probably kept him until he was about seven years old.

Her son — She had Moses educated like one of the royal princes, so that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," as Stephen said before the Jewish council. This "wisdom" included statecraft, natural philosophy, astronomy, music, reading, and drawing. This fine education stood him in good stead when he was called upon to become the leader and ruler of his people. (Again the providence of God. Cat., Qu. 120.)

Moses' Flight.

Was grown — Forty years old. Acts 7, 22. — Thothmes III, according to latest researches, is the name of the king who reigned then. His cruel reign lasted forty-five years; he died shortly before God called Moses to deliver the children of Israel from the Egyptian bondage.

His brethren — The children of Israel. He did not want to be an Egyptian, but "by faith, . . . when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. 11, 25. See also v. 26.

Their burdens — The hard labor and brutal treatment under which they were groaning.

Spied an Egyptian — Very likely one of the cruel taskmasters, who was beating the Hebrew laborer most unmercifully.

Slew [killed] *the Egyptian* — "He supposed," as Stephen said to the Jews (Acts 7, 25), "his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them."

However, it was a premature zeal. God's hour had not come; he had not yet been called by God to deliver his people.

Strove together — They quarreled with each other, with the result that it finally came to blows ("smitest thou").

Who made thee a prince, etc. — He had been reared as a prince at the court of Pharaoh, but who had made him a prince *and judge* (a leader) over the children of Israel?

Slay Moses — His being an adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter did not protect him from the wrath of the monarch because he had shown his sympathy with the Israelites.

Moses fled . . . land of Midian — The Midianites, whose ancestor was Midian, a son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25, 1. 2), lived partly in Arabia, near the northeastern arm of the Red Sea, partly in the Syro-Arabian Desert, east of the Moabites and Ammonites. Moses made a journey of from two to three hundred miles.

Sat down by a well — Which was used for watering the flocks. (See pp. 37. 50.)

The priest of Midian — He was the sheik, or head, of his tribe and at the same time a priest. He probably was a worshiper of the true God, though his knowledge of Him, no doubt, was rather fragmentary.

Drew water — Which, as well as the shepherding of the flocks, was the duty of unmarried daughters of the Midianites.

Watered their flock — Thus obtaining the best possible introduction to their father.

Reuel (Reguel) = "Friend of God." His official title was Jethro, "His Excellency." (See next lesson.)

An Egyptian — From Moses' dress and the language which he spoke, they judged him to be an Egyptian.

Why is it, etc. — He mildly rebuked his daughters for their lack of courtesy and hospitality.

He gave Moses Zipporah — Probably Moses served for her as Jacob did for Rachel.

CATECHISM: First Article ("defends me," etc.); Fifth Commandment, Qu. 122.

HYMNS: 516, 1. 2; 60, 4. 5; 498, 1; 63, 3; 23, 6; 257, 3; 273, 2; 372, 11. 12; 525, 8.

BIBLE READINGS: Pss. 2, 3, and 13; Ps. 37, 35–40; 1 Pet. 4, 12—19.

25. The Call of Moses. Ex 3-4

At the age of forty Moses was not yet a fit instrument for the great work God wanted him to do. The Lord prepares men through whom He intends to accomplish great things in this world in a special way, quietly, unseen by men. Moses needed forty years more of schooling under the ruling and guiding hand of God before he was in the proper condition to fulfil the arduous and important duties awaiting him.

GOD CALLS MOSES.

Moses kept the flock — First a shepherd, then a great ruler. David had the same career. — Moses remained in Midian forty years, so that he was eighty when the Lord called him to deliver his people out of the house of bondage.

Horeb — Called "mountain of God" because the Lord revealed Himself there to Moses. "The range of Horeb spreads over an extensive field and may be divided into two groups, exhibiting rugged and venerable mountains of dark granite, stern, naked, splintered peaks and ridges, some of them of indescribable grandeur, rising in frowning majesty high above the general level of the range." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) Between one of these groups, in a fertile valley, Jethro Valley, Moses fed the flocks of Jethro, "the priest in Midian." (Map 2.) — Two sons were born to Moses while he dwelt in Midian, Gershom ("Stranger," or "Sojourner") and Eliezer ("God my Helper").

Angel of the Lord — The Son of God. (See pp. 39 and 48.)

Burned with fire . . . not consumed — This made it evident to Moses that this was not a natural fire, but a heavenly vision. — It was a thorn-bush, shittim, or acacia,

which grows to a height of more than fifteen feet. It is full of thorns, and its twigs end in thorns.

Put off thy shoes — It was the custom in the East, and is so still, to remove one's sandals upon entering a place of worship or upon approaching an important personage. — Here Moses was in the presence of the great God (Second Person), and therefore he was to show proper reverence. (Cat., Qu. 16; Ps. 33, 8: "stand in awe of Him.")

Surely seen — Thou and thy people may think that I do not know how the Egyptians are treating My people, or that

Mount Horeb.

I am not moved to compassion by their piteous moanings and fervent prayers for help. I know what My people are suffering, and I will deliver them from their cruel bondage. — "The Lord" is God the Son.

Moses hid his face — Sinful man cannot endure the sight of the holy God.

Milk and honey — A rich, fruitful country. — I shall fulfil the promise I gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Cat., Qu. 104: "faithful"; Ps. 33, 4.)

Bring forth My people out of Egypt — I, the Lord, am calling thee to this high office. Thou shalt be the leader and ruler of My people.

That I should go unto Pharaoh — I am too humble and weak. I am no longer regarded as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; I am a poor, despised refugee. Nor am I a young man; I am eighty years old. — But: "My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12, 9. "I will be with thee."

I AM THAT I AM — God's great name: The Unchangeable, ever the same merciful, loving, faithful God. Jas. 1, 17. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps 90, 1. 2. Cf. Heb. 13, 8: "Jesus Christ *the same* yesterday," etc.)

Not believe me — They have had no revelations from heaven since the days of the patriarchs. They will claim that I am a false prophet, a deceiver.

Rod — Serpent — The Lord endowed him with power to perform miracles. — A miracle is an event or a deed that surpasses the powers of man and the laws of nature and can be performed by man only if endued with such power by God.

Leprous as snow — This was the "white leprosy," which often attacked only one limb. It was called thus because the skin took on a shiny whiteness. It was a milder form of this dreadful disease. Lev. 13, 3.

River — Nile.

Slow of speech — I stutter, stammer. A leader of men, a leader of an army in battle, ought to have the gift of ready speech, if not eloquence.

I will teach thee — Thou wilt know what and how to speak when I shall send thee.

Whom Thou wilt send — This is the fourth refusal, and a complete, sweeping refusal it is: 1. "Who am I," etc.? 2. "They will not believe me." 3. "I am not eloquent." 4. "Send whom Thou wilt send."

Anger of the Lord — The Lord had listened to all of Moses' excuses with great long-suffering, but when he refused outright, His righteous wrath was roused against him.

Aaron . . . shall be thy spokesman — Notwithstanding Moses' stubbornness, God did not reject him, but helped his infirmities (Rom. 8, 26) — for such they were — and retained him in the exalted office to which He had called him.

Moses Obeys the Lord.

Moses went — He repented of his obstinacy. — Compare with this the action of the prophet Jonah after he had received a special divine call.

The rod of God — The shepherd's staff which he held in his hand when the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush, and with which he was to perform his first miracle in the presence of Pharaoh (therefore now called "the rod of God").

The Lord said to Aaron, etc. — What a great comfort to Moses, who followed the divine call with trembling and anxiety of heart, to meet his brother, whom he had not seen for forty years, and who was to assist him in his arduous duties!

All the elders of Israel — The heads of tribes, who were regarded as the representatives of the people.

The people believed — Believed that Moses and Aaron were the messengers of God.

Bowed their heads and worshiped — They performed the usual acts of adoration and praised God for remembering them in their distress. (Cat., Qu. 28; Ps. 50, 15.)

Catechism: Qu. 306. 307. The servants of God in His Church are now called by God *through* men, *i. e.,* the Christian congregation (mediate call), while Moses and the Old Testament prophets, as well as the apostles, were called directly by God (immediate call).

Hymns: 257, 3; 273, 11. 12; 525, 8.

Bible Readings: Is. 41, 8—14; Jer. 1, 4—19.

26. Moses Before Pharaoh. The Plagues. Ex. 5–10

Moses and Aaron were readily received by their people as God's messengers. But as they could not leave Egypt without the permission of Pharaoh, they were obliged to ask him to grant this permission. Pharaoh, however, bade the Lord open defiance when he heard the divine command

to let Israel go, and therefore the Lord sent ten dreadful plagues upon him and the Egyptians, thus showing him that He was mightier than he, indeed, that He is the Lord Almighty, whose will no one can resist. Rom. 9, 19.

Moses Before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh — Not the same king before whom Moses had fled forty years ago. Amenophis II had lately ascended the Egyptian throne.

Stubble — Bricks were made by mixing mud with chopped straw to keep the mud from cracking and cleaving apart. The mud was put in molds to form the bricks, which were dried in the sun. Now that the straw was no longer furnished the Israelitish workmen, they had to gather the long stubbles of the grain-fields after the grain had been cut by the Egyptians a little below the heads and also chop it themselves. — "Specimens of these bricks can be found in the British Museum, in London, and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. They are usually from four to eight inches square and one and a half to two inches thick, unbaked, but very hard. . . . The lower courses of these walls are of well-made bricks with chopped straw in them; but higher up the courses of brick are not so good, the straw is long and scanty, and the last courses have no straw at all, but have sedges, rushes, and water-plants in the mud."

Officers of the children of Israel — Sectional overseers appointed by the Egyptian taskmasters, or superintendents.

Ye are idle — A lie on the face of it. Men who were "worked to death" — idle! (Cat., Qu. 59; Hab. 2, 6; Jer. 22, 13.)

So entreated [treated, dealt with] *this people?* — Thou didst promise that Thou wouldst free them from the cruel bondage. Instead, their condition is growing worse! — It was a cry of deep distress. But he did not cast away his faith; in his inmost heart he believed that the Lord would grant the promised deliverance. (Cat., Qu. 28; Ps. 50, 15: "Call upon Me," etc.)

Now shalt thou see — The Lord strengthened Moses' faith by giving him a renewed promise. He and his people would see His "strong hand" (His almighty power), and the Egyptians would feel it — to their hurt. (Cat., Qu. 209; Ps. 50, 15: "I will deliver thee." Qu. 210: "is able.")

He hardened Pharaoh's heart — Pharaoh had first hardened his heart against God and His Word. He uttered words of blasphemy when the Lord's messenger told him to let Israel go. Thereupon the Lord hardened his heart by withdrawing from him the Spirit of Grace and abandoning him to the perverseness of his own sinful heart. (Cat., Qu. 183: "obstinately resist . . . own fault"; Acts 7, 51.)

The Signs.

Wise men — These "wise men" were "deeply versed in philosophy and the sciences, especially astronomy," but were also soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and interpreters of dreams. They occupied a position of great influence at court and often sat in council with the monarch.

Sorcerers — Magicians, wizards; men who with the assistance of the evil spirits performed deeds exceeding the powers of man; snake-charmers. (Cat., Qu. 26.)

Swallowed up their rods — The Lord desired to show Pharaoh that He *"alone* doeth great wonders," *real,* actual miracles (Ps. 136, 4), while the so-called miracles of Satan, as well as of those who are in league with him, are *"lying* wonders" (2 Thess. 2, 9).

The Plagues.

Aaron . . . smote the waters — Because Pharaoh refused to obey the Lord and, still worse, blasphemed Him and because he hardened his heart, the Lord now began to show His "strong hand."

All the waters were turned to blood — Not only the waters of the Nile, but also those of all its tributaries, lakes, canals, and ponds were turned to blood, so that no human being or animal could drink thereof and the fish could not live in this liquid.

The magicians of Egypt did so — They, no doubt, changed the water of the wells dug by the Egyptians. But they could not turn the bloody fluid back to genuine water. *That* God's servants alone could do. Nevertheless Pharaoh remained stubborn and stiff-necked.

Frogs came up — This plague was particularly loathsome because these unsightly, clammy beasts even got in the Egyptians' beds and their kneading-troughs, and their religion forbade them to kill them because they were objects of worship.

Entreat the Lord that He, etc. — Although the magicians with their black art had also juggled up some frogs, Pharaoh had to admit that only the God of Israel, not his magicians, was able to remove this plague.

Saw that there was respite — That is the way of God's enemies: as soon as He ceases to punish them, they become the same old hardened sinners, although while the rod was on their backs, they made the best of promises. (Cat., Qu. 183; Acts 7, 51; Hos. 13, 9.)

Lice — Small gnats or dust-ticks, which crawl all over the body. The gnats inflict painful stings, while the dust-ticks fasten themselves on their victims, suck the blood, and in a few hours distend from the size of a grain of sand to that of a pea.

This is the finger of God — At this point the magicians failed with their enchantments and were compelled to acknowledge the presence of a higher power than they could command. (Cat., Qu. 263: "Thine is the power"; Qu. 104: "omnipotent.")

Flies — "Not only house-flies, but cattle-flies, mosquitoes, fleas, midges, and all kinds of stinging insects." They came in "swarms" — billions of them everywhere. — Goshen, the country of the Israelites, was entirely free from this plague. — Pharaoh should see that the God of Israel, His chosen people, had sent this plague.

Murrain — A malignant, contagious fever affecting domestic animals, killing them soon upon being attacked. As the Egyptians regarded the cow as a sacred animal, they

felt this plague more keenly than others. — The cattle of the children of Israel, who were mainly cattle-raisers and shepherds, were spared by the providence of God. (First Article.)

Boils and blains — Ulcers and open sores, probably akin to smallpox. — The magicians could not only not produce these pustules and sores, but they themselves were afflicted with them.

Hail — It rarely rains in Egypt, and hail is still more unusual. Rain fell about in the middle of January, when the barley was in the ear. Coming with a very severe thunderstorm ("the fire [lightning] ran along upon the ground," Ex. 9, 23), it struck terror to the souls of the people. It destroyed the growing crops and the trees and killed man and beast. — Goshen again was exempt from the plague.

Locusts — No vegetable life still left after the dreadful hailstorm could escape their ravages. "The east wind brought the locusts." Ex. 10, 13. Wherever locusts appear, they cover the ground for miles, sometimes to the depth of two or more feet.

Darkness — A darkness that was not penetrated by a single ray or faint gleam of light. For three days no one dared to move about; no sign of life except moaning and crying; no one could eat or drink; a weird feeling came over everybody — a foretoken, as it were, of the "outer darkness" where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in all eternity. (Cat., Qu. 203.)

Israel had light — God did not exempt the children of Israel from every one of these nine plagues lest they become self-righteous and conceited, and in order that they might praise His unmerited goodness and mercy all the more when the rod of punishment passed by them.

Catechism: The Close of the Commandments; Qu. 183.
Hymns: 60, 4. 5; 347, 2; 55, 1—4; 57, 4.
Bible Readings: Prov. 1, 24—33; Rom. 9, 15—23.

27. The Last Plague and the Passover. Ex 11-12

When the Lord sent the plague of darkness, which enveloped all Egypt for three days, Pharaoh seemingly humbled himself under the mighty hand of God and gave Moses permission to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, under the condition, however, that they leave their rich possessions of flocks and herds in the country, as a compensation for the loss of so many subjects. But when he learned that according to the command of the Lord this request could not be complied with, he again hardened his heart; indeed, God Himself, weary of his continued stubbornness and wilful resistance offered His Holy Spirit, abandoned him to the fate which he had so richly deserved. He told Moses that He would visit one more plague upon the stiff-necked king and his people, and then he would, in utter despair, permit the children of Israel to leave Egypt with all they could take with them.

The First-Born Threatened.

Afterwards — After that dreadful visitation of the tenth plague had terrified and completely humbled them.

He will let you go hence — The last plague the Lord was going to send would be of such a dreadful nature that Pharaoh and his people would even implore the Israelites to leave the country, yea, drive them out. Ex. 11, 1.

All the first-born . . . shall die — This punishment was even severer than appears on the surface. For every father to lose his first-born son was sad enough, but in those days the death of a first-born was bewailed much more than that of any other child because the first-born had special privileges: after the death of the father he became the head of the family, he received a double portion of the inheritance, and he served as family priest; at the death of the father it became incumbent upon him to provide for his mother and other dependent members of his household. What is more, — the first-born of the king was the son of one of their gods (the Egyptian kings were regarded as gods), and the fact that he was slain discredited and dis-

honored these gods. And as for the first-born of animals, they were worshiped as gods in their temples.

The Lord put a difference, etc. — It was to become still more evident than when the other nine plagues were sent that the God of Israel was and is the true, the living God, that He held out His hand to bless and protect His people and, on the other hand, to punish and humiliate His enemies.

Passover — The feast commemorating the fact that God passed over the houses of the Israelites when all the first-born of the Egyptians were slain.

This month — The first month of the Jewish church-year, called Abib (also Nisan), corresponding to our March (latter part) and April.

Every man — Father of a family.

Lamb — The young of goats could also be taken instead. — The lamb had to be at least eight days old (Lev. 22, 27), but it must not be more than a year old.

Without blemish — Without a defect or infirmity; not blind, lame; no weakling, etc. — The paschal lamb was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God "without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. 1, 19. The blood of the paschal lamb on the doors of the Israelites saved them from the angel of death; the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, saves those who are washed with it from eternal death. (Cat., Qu. 153.)

Keep it until the fourteenth day — The paschal lamb had to be set apart unto the Lord (Ex. 13, 12) from the rest of the flock; also in this respect a type of the divine Lamb of Sacrifice, who is not only "holy, harmless, undefiled," but also "separate [set apart] from sinners." Heb. 7, 26. (Cat., Qu. 141.)

In the evening — Between sundown and the dusk of evening; "at even, at the going down of the sun." Deut. 16, 6.

Ye shall take the blood, etc. — There was to be "a difference" between the houses of the Israelites and the

Egyptians. There is a difference between the Christians and the unbelievers; the former are washed with the blood of the Lamb of God; not so the latter. (Cat., Qu. 193; 2 Cor. 6, 14—18: righteousness, light, on the one hand; unrighteousness, darkness, the unclean thing, on the other.)

Eat the flesh — The lamb was to be "roasted with fire," entire, not a bone of it to be broken (a type of Christ, Ex. 12, 46; John 19, 36). It was to be roasted on a spit; no pot or pan was to be used.

Unleavened bread — Baked without leaven (yeast); the emblem of purity. "The loaves were shaped like a plate and, when leavened, were ordinarily of the thickness of one's little finger. . . . The unleavened bread was very thin and was broken, not cut." — "Bitter herbs" were also to be eaten with the meat and bread; they symbolized the bitterness of the Egyptian bondage and the bitterness of sorrow over sin — repentance. — Only those who are sorry for their sins and tremble at the well-merited wrath of God yearn to have their sins washed away by the blood of the heavenly Paschal Lamb.

Nothing of it remain — If the family was too small, others should be invited to partake with them of the Passover-meal. — Whatever remained uneaten was to be burned with fire. — As to the feast as celebrated after the children of Israel had been settled in Canaan, the following description may be given as covering all the essentials: "The feast began by the handing around of a cup of wine mixed with water, over which the head of the family or the chief of the association (if several households celebrated together) pronounced the benediction. The lamb, roasted whole, and the other dishes were then placed on the table, and after a second cup of wine the meal was eaten. Everybody present partook of the lamb, the bitter herbs, and the unleavened bread, and care was taken that no bone was broken. . . . After the meal followed the third cup of wine, then the singing of psalms (Pss. 113—118, the Great Hallel — Praise) and hymns, and finally a fourth, and perhaps a fifth,

cup of wine. Then followed the Feast of Unleavened Bread, occupying seven days." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

Your loins girded, etc. — The long, flowing robe, the outer garment, of the Passover celebrants was to be girded round the loins (to enable them to move about freely), shoes, or sandals, not worn in the house or at meals, were to be fastened on the feet, and the traveler's staff was to be taken in the hand, ready to begin the journey at a moment's notice, as soon as the first-born in the houses of the Egyptians would be slain. For this reason, too, they were to eat the Passover lamb "in haste."

The Lord's Passover — A festival commanded by the Lord and to be celebrated to the glory of His name. — The Passover was the Second Sacrament of the Old Covenant, Circumcision being the first. — In our second Sacrament, the Lord's Supper, we eat and drink the body and blood of our divine Passover Lamb, Christ.

Smite all the first-born — Every first-born child of the Egyptians was to die at midnight.

I will pass over, etc. — From this divine promise the festival takes its name — Passover.

Throughout your generation — The Passover Feast was to be celebrated every year until the great Paschal Lamb would appear, who was to deliver all mankind from the bondage of sin and Satan. (Cat., Qu. 31; Col. 2, 16. 17: "holy-day . . . a shadow of," etc.)

Ye shall say — God wants the parents of His people at all times to teach them the way of salvation, to speak to them of what He has done and is doing to save the souls of men: of Christ's great work of redemption, of the Sacraments, of their sacred duty of serving God, spreading the Gospel, etc. (Table of Duties: To Parents.)

Bowed their heads and worshiped — In humble, but grateful acknowledgment of the unmerited mercy and loving-kindness of God.

Did as the Lord had commanded — "Through faith he [Moses and, we may add, all true Israelites] kept the Passover." Heb. 11, 28.

The First-Born Slain.

Smote all the first-born — In the depth of night the whole nation was plunged into deepest sorrow. Pharaoh's high position did not protect his family.

A great cry — "The loud, frantic funeral wail characteristic of the Egyptians. The relatives of the dead, men and women, ran from their homes with apparel disarranged, shrieking, and beating themselves wildly in their grief."

Catechism: Qu. 22 (God will not be mocked; Pharaoh). First Article (God protected His people; "and all this purely," etc.). Sixth Chief Part.

Hymns: 526, 1. 2; 59, 1. 3; 436, 1. 4. 6. 8.

Bible Readings: Ex. 13, 1. 16; Ps. 145; 2 Chron. 35, 1—19.

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28. The Exodus. Ex 12–15

As God had told Moses, so it came to pass: Pharaoh did not permit Israel to leave Egypt until He had sent a punishment that touched his and his entire nation's own flesh and blood — the slaying of the first-born by the "destroyer" (Ex. 12, 23), the angel of death. But Israel, too, had a lesson to learn, the lesson of childlike trust in Him who had promised to deliver them from the inhuman despot whose slaves they had been so long; for hardly had they turned their backs to the house of bondage when a most dreadful prospect opened up before them — extermination by the hands of their powerful enemies. But a renewed divine promise strengthened their faith, and their trust was gloriously rewarded; their enemies were slain by the hand of God, and they continued their journey with hymns of praise.

The Departure.

"Exodus" means "going out"; in our lesson: the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. — The Exodus has been called "the great turning-point in Biblical history."

By night — Soon after midnight. Pharaoh was so terror-stricken and filled with such a dread of that strong God of the Israelites (without, however, coming to repentance) that he did not want to wait till morning to grant Israel permission to leave Egypt. (Cat., Qu. 82: "a jealous God"; 84—86.)

Get you forth — Make haste to leave the country.

Urgent upon the people — Begged them to depart with the greatest possible speed — just as the Lord had foretold.

We be all dead men — They feared the Lord would kill them all if they kept the Israelites in Egypt any longer. Heb. 10, 31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Borrowed of the Egyptians, etc. — "Borrow" and "lend" in our story mean "demand" and "give." The Lord wanted the children of Israel to receive at least a small part payment, as it were, for the services rendered their cruel masters. And because "the fear of the Lord" had come over the Egyptians, they willingly gave them gold and silver ornaments, such as chains, bracelets, and earrings, as well as articles of clothing. They were only too glad to get rid of these people, whose God was too strong for them!

And the children of Israel journeyed — Heb. 11, 27 the exodus of the people, especially of their leader, Moses, is called an act of faith.

Took the bones of Joseph — See Lesson 22, p. 101.

Six hundred thousand — Not counting women and children — about two million souls. A procession about twelve miles in length.

Pillar of a cloud — To protect them against the burning rays of the sun, besides "leading them the way."—A miracle!

By night in a pillar of fire — How good the Lord was to them! — It was the Son of God "that followed them." 1 Cor. 10, 3. (Cat., Qu. 122.)

The selfsame day — They all left Egypt on the same day, the day after the Passover Festival.

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The Pursuit.

The people fled — With Pharaoh's permission.

Pursued after them — Suddenly "his heart was turned against them." According to God's will this hardened sinner was to rush headlong into his own destruction.

Chariots — See Lesson 18, p. 82.

Encamping by the sea — The Red Sea. (Map 1.) So called probably from the red coral or zoophytes (polyps that form branches or treelike colonies on the surface of the ocean. It was called Sea of Suph, apparently from the wool-like weeds growing in it. — The Israelites were between Migdol and the Red Sea. Facing them was the arm of the mighty ocean with its surging billows, behind them and to the right of them mighty mountains, while to their left they saw, in the distance, Pharaoh's army coming towards them to annihilate them. Humanly speaking, there was no avenue of escape — absolutely no hope for them.

Sore afraid — "Sore" — very much. They were struck with hopeless terror. Imagine the lamenting, wailing, screaming, shrieking, as well as groaning and murmuring of those two million people. Ex. 14, 11. 12. But the true children of God among them "cried out unto the Lord," *i. e.*, they called upon Him to deliver them from what seemed to mean utter destruction or a state of worse servitude than before.

Hold your peace — Do not fear your powerful enemy; he will not be able to harm you. "Fear not; only believe." Mark 5, 36. "Fear not, O little flock, the foe who madly seeks your overthrow," etc. Hymn 276, 1.

Wherefore criest thou to Me? — God heard the sighing of his heart (he had not spoken a word), elicited by the fear and grumbling and the reproachings of the people: for they had lost courage again at the sight of the pursuing Egyptian army. (Cat., Qu. 208; Ps. 10, 17: "heard the desire," etc.)

Lift thou up thy rod — With the same shepherd's staff with which he had performed miracles in the presence of

Pharaoh he was to separate the waters of an arm of the Red Sea, so that they would form high walls to the right and left of the people as they would cross its bed.

ISRAEL DELIVERED.

The Angel of God — The Son of God.

Removed — While otherwise He went *before* them (see first section), He now moved the cloud-pillar to the rear of His emigrating people, so that it was between them and the pursuing Egyptians, making it impossible for these to attack them.

Cloud of darkness . . . gave light — The miracle was intensified: the same cloud-pillar was dark on the side facing the Egyptians and bright, emitting a strong light, on the other side. Thus the pillar became a strong protection to Israel as well as a guide.

Moses stretched out his hand — The Lord desired to perform the miracle of dividing and chaining the Red Sea through His chosen servant.

Strong east wind — A dry, hot wind from the Arabian Desert, which dried up the bed of the sea very quickly.

A wall unto them — As the pillar of a cloud was between God's people and the pursuing Egyptians and the waters of the Red Sea formed a wall to the right and left of them, a flanking attack of the enemy was likewise impossible. — The children of Israel passed in that night from Africa to Asia. — "By *faith* they passed through the Red Sea." Heb. 11, 29.

The sea returned — The waters which had been miraculously divided rushed violently back into their bed while the Egyptians endeavored to cross it.

Overthrew the Egyptians — While the Egyptians were in the act of crossing, the Lord "troubled them," confused them, struck terror to their hearts, by the manner in which He moved the cloud-pillar, and made the chariot wheels slip from the axles, so that they made but slow progress; and when the whole pursuing army was enclosed in the bed of the sea, the waters came roaring back into their former

place and drowned them all. When they became aware of their perilous position and decided to flee, it was too late. Not one escaped. See Ex. 14, 24—28.

Israel's Thanksgiving.

Sang Moses and the children of Israel — A song of praise and thanksgiving. This miracle had strengthened their faith and kindled within them a spirit of deep gratitude. (First Article: "For all which it is my duty to thank and praise . . . Him.")

Triumphed gloriously — The Lord had shown His people that He is the almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, with whom nothing is impossible, and that no one is put to shame who trusts in Him.

Miriam — Here called a prophetess. She was the leader of the women's chorus, which "answered" Moses and the men of Israel, that is, "chanted the refrain at the end of every verse, or stanza, as sung by Moses and the children of Israel." It was a sort of *antiphonal singing*, of which we often hear in the Old Testament. Miriam and a number of Israelitish women, all joyfully leaping, dancing, striking the timbrels with their hands, and singing the praises of the Lord, formed one group, while another band formed the other. Both groups would alternately move toward one another and again retreat, dancing, striking their instruments, and singing, the first chorus intoning a phrase and the second responding.

Heb. 11, 29 — Faith, "the evidence of things not seen," was needed here indeed. But faith rests on a divine promise. The latter the Egyptians did not have; hence, "assaying to do" what the Israelites had done, they "were drowned."

Catechism: Conclusion of the Commandments; First Article, Qu. 122; Third Petition (exposition); Second Commandment ("praise and give thanks"), Qu. 28.

Hymns: 193; 498, 1; 525, 4. 8; 273, 1—3; 63, 1—3; 60.

Bible Readings: Ps. 46; Is. 40, 10—31; Ex. 15, 1—21; Ps. 37; Ps. 66; Ps. 136, 1—15.

Annotational Matter.

The Jews had a double course of months after leaving Egypt, one constituting the civil, the other the sacred year (church-year). The former commenced with the first new moon in October, the latter with the first new moon in April, because they left Egypt on the fifteenth of that month. The ancient Hebrews called the months by their numbers, though at the same time they also applied a special name to each month. The length of the month was regulated by the changes of the moon.

Table of Jewish Months.

Before the Exile.	During and after the Exile.	Our Months.
1. (7.) *Abib	Nisan, Neh. 2, 1	March — April
2. (8.) Zif	Iyar, 1 Kings 6, 1	April — May
3. (9.) Third	Sivan, Esther 8, 9	May — June
4. (10.) Fourth	Tammuz	June — July
5. (11.) Fifth	Ab	July — August
6. (12.) Sixth	Elul, Neh. 6, 15	August — Sept.
7. (1.) Ethanim	Tisri, 1 Kings 8, 2	Sept. — Oct.
8. (2.) Bul	Marchesvan (Hesvan), 1 Kings 6, 38	Oct. — Nov.
9. (3.) Ninth	Kisleu (Chisleu), Neh. 1, 1	Nov. — Dec.
10. (4.) Tenth	Tebeth, Esther 2, 16	Dec. — Jan.
11. (5.) Eleventh	Sebat, Zech. 1, 7	Jan. — Feb.
12. (6.) Twelfth	Adar, Esther 3, 7	Feb. — March

* The first figure indicates the month of the sacred, or church-year, the second (in parentheses) that of the civil year.

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29. Israel in the Wilderness. Ex 15-17

The Lord led His people out of Egypt with a mighty hand. But He did not permit them to take the shortest route to the land of promise; "for God said, 'Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.' But God led the people about," *i. e.*, a roundabout way, "through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea" (Ex. 13, 17. 18), to Mount Sinai, where He wanted to reveal His just and holy will to them, while they should solemnly promise Him obedience and willing service. Here He wanted to make a covenant with Israel.

THE QUAILS.

Wilderness of Shur — Between Elim (Map 2) and Rephidim, extending 25 miles along the shore of the Red Sea. It is barren, but has some vegetation. Travelers report seeing numerous quails upon this plain in modern times.

Marah — Somewhere on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, probably the modern Huwara, 33 miles farther south.

The whole congregation murmured — A consequence of their unbelief and impatience. (First Commandment: lack of trust in God's omnipotence and goodness.) — The children of Israel had been on their journey to the Land of Promise about thirty days. We often hear that they murmured, but it is not recorded that they ever praised the Lord for His goodness to them. — Now came the time of probation.

A tree . . . made sweet — The Lord performed another miracle to shame the ungrateful people. He gave to that tree miraculous properties, which changed the bitter water into good drinking-water.

I am the Lord that healeth thee — Spiritual application: As I, the Lord, have miraculously healed that water, so will I heal thee, O My people, if thou wilt believe in Me as thy God and thy Redeemer.

Elim — The second resting-station of the children of Israel after they had crossed the Red Sea. Here there was an abundant supply of water and shade-trees, a boon especially for the fatigued women and children in that hot desert region. (Map 2.)

Wilderness of Sin — On the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez. (Map 2.)

Ye — It was God Himself who had commanded Moses to lead them out of Egypt and had shown them the way which they were to travel.

Hunger — They yearned for the flesh-pots of Egypt, but forgot all about the unbearable burdens they had to shoulder there.

At even ye shall eat, etc. — God did not punish the people as they had deserved, but tried to draw them to Himself with loving-kindness.

Quails — Resembling the birds of the same name in our country. — "At the season when the Israelites gathered them, quails still migrate from Africa northward in immense numbers." But by a miracle of the Lord the usual number of these migrating birds was greatly increased, and at the beck of the Lord they came at the very hour when He wanted to show Israel His almighty power to help.

THE MANNA.

Manna — Meaning, "What is this?" Our lesson describes this manna as "a small round thing" and as being as small as "the hoarfrost on the ground," "like coriander seed," "and the taste of it like wafers made with honey." — Israel needed about 2,000,000 pounds daily of this heavenly bread, which God supplied in a miraculous manner.

This is the bread, etc. — The children of Israel were to learn the lesson of entire dependence upon God. They had no other means of obtaining nourishing food during their journey in the wilderness.

According to his eating — According to the needs of the family. (Cat., Qu. 247. 121.)

Let no man leave of it, etc. — Also the lesson of obedience was to be learned. (First Article: "my duty to . . . obey Him" because of His unmerited "fatherly, divine goodness and mercy" shown me.)

Sixth day . . . twice as much — The seventh day was to be the day of rest.

Did not stink — Again a miracle. It did not spoil because the Lord wanted it to keep for two days.

There went out some people — They dishonored God: 1) by not believing Him; 2) by craving more than the double portion. (Cat., Qu. 75; 1 Tim. 6, 6—10: "contentment"; "having food . . . content.")

Coriander-seed — The coriander-plant grows wild in Palestine and neighboring countries (often cultivated in our country). It has a round, slender stalk, broad leaves, which frequently serve the uses of a vegetable, and white or reddish umbrella-shaped blossoms. The seeds are globe-

shaped and, when dry, are pleasant to the taste and smell. Incrusted with sugar, they are often sold by confectioners.

Like wafers made with honey — God gave His people a very palatable food. — From Num. 11, 8 we see that it could be prepared in several ways.

A potful . . . to be kept — A golden pot (Ex. 16, 33; Heb. 4, 9) had to be provided in which an omer (a man's portion) of the manna should be put up for preservation and placed in or near the Ark of the Covenant, in order that succeeding generations might see the very substance which their fathers were miraculously fed in the wilderness.

Water from the Rock.

Rephidim — Near Mount Sinai. (Map 2; also insert map.) Israel arrived there in the latter part of May or early in June, about forty-five days after they had left Egypt.

Give us water — As though Moses could conjure up, as it were, whatever he wished!

Horeb — See Lesson 25.

Massah — "Temptation, trial."

Meribah — "Quarrel, strife." Near Rephidim.

I will stand . . . upon the rock — It was the Son of God who stood upon that rock. See 1 Cor. 10, 4. He is the spiritual Rock, the Rock of Ages, the Rock of Salvation.

Tempted the Lord — They doubted that the Lord was with them and would give them what they needed. (Sin against First Commandment: "trust.")

The Amalekites.

Amalek — A powerful people of uncertain origin; first mentioned Gen. 14, 7. Num. 24, 20 they are called "the first of the nations." Besides being defeated at Rephidim, they were routed by Gideon, Saul, and David and finally were exterminated. 1 Sam. 30, 17; 1 Chron. 4, 43. (Map 2.)

Joshua = "Whose help is Jehovah." Mentioned here for the first time. Faithful and valuable servant of Moses

(called the "minister" — servant of Moses, Ex. 24, 13) and his successor. He was now about forty-four years of age.

Hur — Believed to have been the husband of Miriam. According to Ex. 31, 2 he was the grandfather of Bezaleel, the builder of the Tabernacle.

When Moses held up his hand — In prayer. Moses was a mighty man of prayer. Israel obtained the victory over Amalek through the prayer of faith of their God-given leader. — A powerful lesson for us! (Second Commandment. Qu. 211; Mark 11, 24: "believe . . . and ye shall have them"; Matt. 21, 22; Jas. 5, 16.)

Moses' hands were heavy — Grew lame and stiff. How he did love his people to exert himself almost beyond human endurance for their welfare!

Joshua discomfited Amalek — Utterly vanquished, routed, the enemy. — After the victory Moses built an altar to the Lord and called it "Jehovah-nissi," *i. e.,* "Jehovah my banner," in remembrance of the Lord's wonderful help. (Cat., Qu. 28.)

Catechism: First Article (Qu. 121); Fourth Petition ("lead us to know it"); Second Commandment ("call upon it," etc.).

Hymns: 109, 4; 509, 1; 292, 8—10; 62, 11—13; 273, 2; 60, 4.

Bible Readings: John 6, 30—59; Matt. 6, 25—34; Ps. 23.

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30. The Giving of the Law on Sinai. Ex 19–24

In the desert, on their way to the Land of Promise, God made a covenant with His people — the Covenant of the Law: They should be His peculiar people and receive untold blessings if they would walk in all His ways: love Him above all and obey all His commandments. But, alas! they did not keep this covenant, so that, if the Lord had not also made the Covenant of Grace with them (the covenant already made with Abraham), He would have been compelled utterly

to reject them, as He had done with Pharaoh and his people. — The Law of God can but reveal to us our sinful condition and thus prepare us for the Gospel, the glorious tidings that "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10, 4.

The Preparation.

In the third month — On the first day of Sivan, fifty days after they had left Egypt.

Wilderness of Sinai — The plain at the foot of Mount Sinai. (Map 2.)

Mount Sinai.

Camped there before Mount Sinai — (Map 2; inset map.) According to Josephus, Mount Sinai was the highest of all the mountain ranges in that vicinity. Though it cannot be determined with absolute certainty which of these ranges was Mount Sinai, as that name has not been retained, what is now believed to be the mountain peak from which the Ten Commandments were proclaimed to Israel rises to a height of 7,359 feet. It rises abruptly, so that the granite rocks could be touched (Ex. 19, 12; Heb. 12, 18) by one standing at the base. The mountain is completely sur-

rounded by a deep valley, large enough for the assembly of two million Israelites, and fed by four running streams, so that the people had sufficient water for themselves and their cattle. — Near the base of this mountain, in the convent of St. Catherine, Tischendorf, in 1859, found the Codex Sinaiticus, containing twenty-six books of the Old Testament and one of the oldest and best manuscripts of the New Testament (complete) in existence.

On eagles' wings — As the eagles carry their young on their wings when they want to teach them to fly (Deut. 32, 11), so the Lord had shown Himself the almighty Protector of His people since their departure out of the house of bondage.

Covenant — See Lesson 8.

A peculiar treasure — A peculiarly precious possession of Jehovah.

A kingdom of priests — A spiritual kingdom, a Kingdom of Grace, in which God's people serve Him, their Lord and King, willingly (Ps. 110, 3), offering up (as priests) prayer and thanksgiving. (Cat., Qu. 142; Matt. 21, 5.)

A holy nation — Putting off the old and putting on the new man, by the grace of God abounding in good and holy works. — Note the three points of distinction of God's people with the attendant sacred duties.

We will do — They were willing to make this covenant with God. Their spirit was willing, but their flesh — how quickly did this become evident! — was weak.

Sanctify the people — Outwardly they were to sanctify themselves by washing their clothes; inwardly, by solemnly considering the importance of the coming event. The people were to be consecrated to the Lord. — No unrepentant sinner must dare approach the holy God.

Against the third day — In preparation for, so as to be ready for the great event that was to happen on the third day.

Set bounds — Barriers of wood or stone to keep the people back from the foot of the mountain.

Whosoever toucheth — This threat was made to bring the people to a realization of their utter unworthiness of drawing

near to the place where the holy God deigned to manifest Himself visibly to His sinful creatures; they must remain at a respectful distance. (Cat., Qu. 16; Ps. 33, 8: "stand in awe of Him.")

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Thunders and lightnings — Not the ordinary phenomena of nature. God made "His ministers," the angels, "a flaming fire." Ps. 104, 4; 68, 17.

Trumpet — Horn-shaped instruments that carried the sound a great distance; originally made of the horns of rams, later of metal. They were used for the giving of signals, and in subsequent years the priests made use of trumpets to announce the approach of festivals. — Here the angels were God's trumpets. See Deut. 33, 2; Acts 7, 53; Gal. 3, 19. (Cat., Qu. 114; Ps. 103, 20. 21: "do His commandments . . . ministers [servants] of His.")

On a smoke — The whole mountain was smoking as if on fire.

The whole mount quaked greatly — See Ps. 104, 32.

Ten Commandments — The phrase in the original is "the ten words." The Greek word "decalog" exactly reproduces the Hebrew. Other phrases for "the ten words" are: "the words of the covenant," "the tables of testimony," or, more briefly, "the testimony." The chest which contained the two tables was therefore called the Ark of the Covenant; the tent under whose cover the tables rested became the tabernacle of witness or of testimony. "The ten words," originally spoken, were written by the finger of God on two stone tablets. — The sum of the two tables is: Love God above all things and thy neighbor as thyself. — The teacher will briefly show that some of the provisions of the Commandments as spoken by God on Mount Sinai concerned only the Israelites. See Luther's wording in our Catechism.

Not make any graven image — No image or likeness of the lights of heaven, of human beings, animals, or inanimate nature was to be made *for the purpose of worshiping them* (idol-worship): "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them."

Jealous God — Being the only true God, He cannot permit His glory to be given to another nor His praise to graven images. (Cat., Qu. 15; Is. 42, 8. — If a child were to despise his father and, instead, to show the love, honor, and obedience he owes him to some one else, his father would not, and could not, tolerate it.)

The Sabbath-day — The seventh day of the week. "Sabbath" = rest, day of rest. (Cat., Qu. 31.)

Upon the land, etc. — As the Lord has not promised to give His New Testament people a certain portion of the earth as their peculiar possession, the New Testament version of this promise reads thus: "That it may be well with thee," etc. Eph. 6, 3.

They fled — Eye and ear of sinful man cannot bear to see God's glory and to hear His voice, see and hear the manifestation of His power and majesty.

We will hear — Terror-stricken to such an extent that they despaired of their lives ("lest we die"), they were exceedingly willing to obey the Lord. Alas, a servile, not a childlike, fear of God!

Thick darkness — Impenetrable darkness.

All the judgments — Special ordinances, laws regulating the political affairs and social relations of the children of Israel, as well as special laws regarding feasts and holy periods.

The Covenant Made.

Builded an altar — By offering sacrifices to God, the people were to show that they accepted as their God Him who had revealed Himself to them so powerfully and unmistakably since their departure from Egypt.

Sent young men — The first-born of the elders.

Book of the covenant — The book in which Moses had written the above-mentioned special ordinances and statutes given him by the Lord on the mount. — It was a Law-covenant Israel made with God, conditioned upon the obedience rendered to this Law. However, the people could not keep this covenant (Acts 15, 10), and therefore their hope of salvation had to be built on "the grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ" (Acts 15, 11). — Make it plain to the children that God's people in the Old Testament were saved in no other way than the Christians in the New Testament.

In the audience of the people — In their hearing.

Moses took the blood — The blood of this and all the Old Testament sacrifices prefigured, and pointed to, the blood of the coming Sacrifice.

Moses was in the mount — He recorded all the words of the Law which God revealed to him, as well as most explicit directions for the erection of a sanctuary, precepts regarding the functions of the priests and Levites, etc.

Catechism: First Article (divine providence). Fourth Petition ("lead us to know it . . . thanksgiving"). Qu. 121. 8.

Hymns: 109, 4; 509, 1; 292, 8—10; 62, 11—13; 273, 2; 60, 4; 391, 1, 11, 12; 109, 3; 247, 7; 314; 408, 1.

Bible Readings: Ex. 24; Ps. 19; Jer. 31, 31—36; Matt. 5, 17—48; Gal. 2, 16—3, 14; Heb. 12, 18—29.

Annotational Matter.

I.

After Moses had led the people to the foot of the mountain, he went up the mountain with Aaron to receive God's commandments to Israel. Deut. 4, 11. While the Law was promulgated, he was, therefore, not at the foot of the mountain. When he and Aaron returned to the bounds, Ex. 19, 12, he had set round about the mountain, the people had all fled in great consternation at what they had seen and heard. And now the heads of the tribes and the elders (Deut. 5, 23) asked Moses to act as their mediator between the people and the holy God (Deut. 5, 28. 29).

II.

God's Law is threefold: the Moral, Ceremonial, and Political, or Civil Law.

1. The *Moral Law* (the Ten Commandments) pertains to all men at all times. It commands all men to lead a perfectly holy life. It demands full obedience, in every particular, to all its precepts. It is a perfect and immovable rule of life, which every man, woman, and child is solemnly bound to follow. It is the

revelation of God's unalterable, holy will, which is to be done on earth as it is in heaven by the celestial host.

2. The *Ceremonial* (or *Ecclesiastical*) *Law* contains precepts for the Old Testament worship. It told the Israelites all about the *sacrifices* they were to bring (Lev. 1—7. 16), the holy, or consecrated, *places* (Tabernacle, Temple), the stated *times* at which they must worship, sacrifice, and observe various feast days, the *vessels* to be used at the holy functions, at which time of the *day* the services were to be held, of the two *Sacraments*, Circumcision and the Passover, and about *clean* and *unclean meats*, what rendered a man clean or unclean according to the Ceremonial Law, what kind of clothes to wear, etc.

The *purpose* of this Law was to preserve the prescribed form of worship; to be a public profession of the faith and doctrine of God's people by means of which they remained separate from the heathen round about them; to prefigure Christ with His saving merits, which were imputed to all who followed its various precepts (sacrifices, circumcision, Passover, etc.) in faith; to remind the people (by sacrifices, purifications, ablutions) of the spiritual uncleanness and, hence, of the need of a Savior from sin; and to show by the outward deeds it demanded how the heart should be disposed toward God.

In the New Testament the Ceremonial Law has been abolished; its precepts do not concern the children of God of the New Covenant. But it may still be read very profitably, inasmuch as it shows us in what measure and to what extent it prefigured Christ and His work of redemption. See Col. 2, 14—17; Acts 15, 6—10; Dan. 9, 27; Matt. 11, 13; Gal. 4, 9—11.

The statement made above that the Ceremonial Law never was binding upon all men, but only upon the Jews, is borne out by the fact that even in the Old Covenant such heathen as came to the knowledge of the true God were never obliged to conform to its precepts, *e. g.*, King Hiram, the Queen of Sheba, Naaman the Syrian, Nebuchadnezzar, etc. Nor do we ever read of heathen having been punished for not observing the Ceremonial Law, while God did indeed punish them for breaking the Moral Law, which was written in their hearts. (Rom. 2, 15.)

3. The *Political* (or *Civil*) *Law* of the Jews contained provisions for the civil magistrates, civil court proceedings, litigations, laws regarding property acquired or inherited, the waging

of war, the punishment of evil-doers, etc. — Its *purpose* was to regulate the affairs of the civil government among the Jews, to separate God's people from all the heathen nations, because the Messiah was to be born out of their midst, and to prefigure the government of the spiritual kingdom of Christ.

Also the Political Law of the Jews has been abolished in the New Testament. Its wise and wholesome provisions might well be studied by lawgivers of Christian countries, and these countries would fare all the better for it; but it is no longer incumbent on any Christian ruler or nation to embody its provisions in their code of laws. Matt. 22, 21; Rom. 13, 1.

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31. The Golden Calf. Ex 32-34

The people had solemnly promised, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," and, "We will hear." When Moses, however, had gone up to the mountain to hear and record all the precepts of the divine Law, it soon became evident that they were an ungrateful, faithless, and stiff-necked people. They went so far as to practise gross heathen idolatry.

Idolatry — The Golden Calf.

Delayed — Moses had been on the mountain with God well-nigh six weeks. — God might have told and shown Moses what He did in a much shorter time. He kept him with Him forty days to test the faithfulness of His people, whom He had so miraculously liberated from the hand of their oppressor, and whom He had promised such great things for the future. But, alas! Israel did not stand the test.

Unto Aaron — Not only was he Moses' brother, but he had been his right hand, next to him in authority. (Cat., Qu. 15; Prov. 3, 5: Aaron "leaned unto his own understanding.")

We wot [know] *not what is become of him* — Moses, our leader, does not return from the mountain. Perhaps he is dead, or he has left for parts unknown, — and what will become of us? We cannot forever remain in this wilderness! We want to go to Canaan!

Break off the golden earrings — Which they had received from the Egyptians on the night of the Exodus. Instead of most earnestly remonstrating with the people and reminding them of their solemn promise, Aaron does their bidding. He may have been of the opinion that the people would be too loath to part with their jewelry to accede to his request. But he was greatly mistaken. — The world always has enough money for its idols.

A molten calf — Aaron very likely made a metal cast and poured the melted gold into this form. Or it was a wooden figure laminated with gold, "a process which is known to have existed in Egypt," the casting "being finished and perfected by being shaped and fashioned with a graving-tool."

These be thy gods — Imagine this image to be your God. — The image of the calf, or young bull, was an imitation of the Apis Bull worshiped by the Egyptians. (Cat., Qu. 15 [gross idolatry]; Ps. 115, 3. 4.)

Aaron built an altar — Aaron well knew that he was committing a most heinous sin against the First Commandment, and that it was rank hypocrisy on the part of Israel to celebrate "a feast to the Lord."

Rose up early — Man, alas! is always willing, yea, eager to serve Satan and his flesh, and he generally finds it possible to "rise up early" for that purpose! (Sunday picnickers, including their children, drive out to their place of enjoyment early in the morning; some church people are "too tired," several hours later, to go to the house of worship!)

Sat down to eat and to drink — A celebration in genuine heathen fashion.

Rose up to play — They drowned the voice of conscience. "They forgot God, their Savior, which had done great things in Egypt." Ps. 106, 21. "A perverse and crooked generation." Deut. 32, 5.

THE LORD'S ANGER.

Thy people — Israel has forsaken Me, has broken the covenant; therefore not My people. "Thy" because Moses was the leader of the people.

Corrupted themselves — Defiled themselves by sinning grossly.

Turned aside quickly — Three months after the Exodus and only forty days since the giving of the Law.

Stiff-necked people — Stubborn, obstinate. They act like a yoke of oxen whose necks cannot be turned because they are such stubborn animals. "A stubborn and rebellious generation." Ps. 78, 8.

Wax hot — Grow or become furious.

Consume them — Wipe them off from the face of the earth; destroy them — they have deserved it. (Cat., Qu. 82: "jealous God"; 83: "threatens to punish," etc.)

Make of thee a great nation — The same promise He gave Abraham, which had come true in a comparatively short period of time. If Moses had been ambitious for power and glory, he would not have been very much concerned about the threat uttered by the Lord; pride would have gotten the better of him.

Moses Intercedes for His People.

Moses besought the Lord — He remained duly mindful of the fact that he was the mediator between God and his nation and entreatingly reminded the Lord of the covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He thus stood the test well; and he prevailed with the Lord Jehovah in prayer and supplication for his brethren. (Cat., Qu. 214; 1 Tim. 2, 1.)

Wherefore should the Egyptians say, etc. — He did not wish to see the glory of God Almighty detracted from by His enemies. (First Commandment.)

For mischief — In order to destroy them. Then the idol-worshiping Egyptians would have jeered and sneered, and God's name would not have been "declared throughout all the earth," as He had told Moses before the Exodus. Ex. 9, 16. — In pleading for his people as he did, Moses was a type of our Lord and Savior, who is our Advocate with the Father, 1 John 2, 1 (Cat., Qu. 141), and unceasingly makes intercession for us, Heb. 7, 25.

The Lord repented of the evil — He stayed His punishing hand, turned His wrath to mercy. — The Lord never repents of anything that He has done, or threatened to do, as though He ever had to be sorry for it, as we sinners must be for wrong, sinful thoughts, words, or actions. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 102, 27: "the same.") But He is always ready, yea, only too willing, to listen to an appeal to His mercy in Christ Jesus. He is "plenteous in mercy" and will not "keep His anger forever."

MOSES' ZEAL.

Two tables — Containing the Ten Commandments. They are called tables "of the testimony" because they contained God's solemn declaration of His holy will.

Graven upon the tables — Carved, cut.

He saw . . . the dancing — Probably indecent dancing, such as was practised among the heathen during their idolatrous worship.

Brake them — It was a holy ire, or wrath, shown here by Moses, symbolical of the fact that Israel had broken God's commandments.

Took the calf, etc. — He melted all the gold, gathered the crude lumps as they came out of the fire, ground them to fine dust between two stones, and then strewed the powder on the waters of the springs coming down from Mount Sinai, which they all had to drink, thus compelling them to drink their god, as it were, and making them heartily ashamed of themselves.

Gate of the camp — Where justice was dispensed.

Who is on the Lord's side? — Who is willing to confess that he committed a grievous sin against God and henceforth to serve Jehovah alone?

Slay every man his brother — There should be no respecting of persons; whosoever would be found outside of the camp should be killed.

Three thousand men — See how God had heard Moses' prayer. He had threatened to destroy the whole nation;

now only three thousand are killed — those who still defied the Lord by leaving the camp.

Children of Levi—From Deut. 33, 9 we learn that because the men of this tribe showed such laudable zeal for the honor of the Lord Jehovah, He chose the priesthood, and all those who had to do service in and about His Sanctuary, from this tribe (Levites, priests, high priest).

The Two Tables Renewed.

Face to face — Not in a full revelation of His glory, — for He told Moses: "Thou canst not see My face; for there shall no man see Me and live," Ex. 33, 20, — but directly, without any other intermediary, and most condescendingly, as though Moses were His equal. Moses is the only mortal to whom such high honor was ever accorded. Deut. 24, 10.

In the cloud — In the pillar of a cloud which guided Israel during the wilderness journey.

Proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God" — A beautiful proclamation of the divine mercy and grace *in Christ Jesus,* made by God Himself! One of the numerous Gospel-gems in the Old Testament: mercy, grace, goodness, long-suffering, forgiveness. (Cat., Qu. 104: "merciful and gracious"; Ex. 34, 6. 7; 1 John 4, 8.) — On the other hand, however, also a proclamation of God's holiness and justice — He must and will punish those who spurn His grace, whose sin-guiltiness therefore will not be "cleared"; the wrath of God abideth on them. John 3, 36. (Cat., Qu. 183; Hos. 13, 9: "thou hast destroyed thyself.")

Pardon our iniquity — Moses, as was proper, included himself ("our") in the fervent entreaty for forgiveness. (Fifth Petition: *"our* trespasses.")

Thine inheritance — Israel is frequently called God's inheritance, heritage, or portion, principally in a spiritual sense, but also because He had promised to give His people a certain temporal heritage — the land of Canaan.

Made a covenant — Renewed His promise; for He had threatened to exterminate the nation.

Forty days . . . nor drink water — Miraculously sustained by the Lord. — A type of Christ, who fasted forty days in the wilderness. Matt. 4, 2.

THE VEIL.

The skin of his face shone — His face emitted rays, similar to the sun when he rises in the morning in all his glory. This halo, a reflection of the divine glory, was a reward for his faithful services, Num. 12, 7; a unique distinction conferred upon him, 2 Cor. 3, 7.

They were afraid — "Even the reflection of the glory of God is too much for sinners."

The rulers — Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had advised Moses, shortly before the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, to select "out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness," to be "rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens," who should assist him in "judging the people at all seasons," taking care of "every small matter," while Moses should judge "every great matter" and "the hard causes."

A veil on his face — Not a thin, semitransparent covering, such as is worn by women in our days, but a piece of cloth which entirely hid his face from view.

CATECHISM: First Commandment, Qu. 15.

HYMNS: 60, 8; 413; 415.

BIBLE READINGS: Ps. 78, 1—58; Is. 1, 2—6; 1 Cor. 10, 1—13; 2 Cor. 3, 7—18.

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32. The Tabernacle. The Blessing. The Blasphemer. The Sabbath-Breaker.

THE TABERNACLE.

Tabernacle — For detailed description see pp. 150—155.

Observed the Sabbath, etc. — See pp. 161—165.

Brought sacrifices — See pp. 159. 160.

A high priest, etc. — See pp. 155—158.

The Blessing.

My name — God's name, which is "God as He has revealed Himself to us" (Cat., Qu. 20), was to be "put upon the children of Israel," placed upon them, so to speak, as a crown, a glittering diadem, especially at the close of each public sacrificial worship. — This custom of dismissing the congregation of the Lord with His blessing (the Benediction) has been very properly retained by the Church of God in the New Testament.

I will bless them — What a glorious promise for the children of God of all ages! No one, therefore, ought to leave the house of worship before the Benediction has been pronounced.

The Lord . . . keep thee — The Lord assures His people assembled at divine services that He will "keep" them — protect both their souls and bodies and ward off all evil; keep them safe in His arms whenever danger threatens their temporal or spiritual welfare.

The Lord . . . be gracious unto thee — The Lord promises His believing children that He will show them a smiling face, His loving-kindness, and His grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, which has been proclaimed to them in the message of the Gospel.

The Lord . . . give thee peace — As a father who sees his death approaching lifts up his head from the pillow of his couch and, spreading out his hands, blesses his kneeling children, so the Lord lifts up His countenance, as it were, upon the worshiping congregation and grants the gracious assurance to all who have accepted the Gospel by the grace of God the Holy Spirit that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" is theirs now and forevermore. God the Father is their loving Father, Jesus Christ is their best Friend, yea, their Brother, and the Holy Spirit dwells in their hearts. — "The threefold blessing reminds us of the Trinity of the Godhead and of the threefold form of the work of God's goodness and mercy in dealing with His children. . . . We are justified in finding here a statement of the Trinity of God." (*Pop. Com.*)

Blasphemy.

Whose father was an Egyptian — One of the "mixed multitude," Ex. 12, 38, "that went up also with them," the children of Israel, when they left Egypt. — The evil of mixed marriages might be emphasized here.

Went out — Those belonging to the mixed multitude, the "strangers," had to encamp separately and marched in the rear of the twelve tribes. One of the strangers one day mingled with the Israelites and got into a quarrel with one of them (they "strove together").

Blasphemed the name of the Lord — Spoke in an irreverent and impious manner of God, uttered an imprecation upon the Lord Jehovah. (Second Commandment.)

Put him in ward — Imprisoned him.

The mind of the Lord — The Lord had told the children of Israel when He gave them the Ten Commandments that He would "not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain," but He had not specified the nature of the punishment the blasphemer was to receive.

Without the camp — All death-sentences had to be executed without the camp of God's people; later, without the gate of the city. — For that reason Jesus, too, having been condemned as a criminal, was taken to a hill outside the gates of Jerusalem (Golgotha), there to be crucified. Heb. 13, 11. 12.

Lay their hands upon his head — The witnesses were to testify, in a solemn act, to the heionus sin committed by the blasphemer.

Stone him — The soul of him who blasphemed the Lord was to be cut off from God's people. The mode of putting a criminal to death with the children of Israel was by stoning (stoning of Stephen). It was customary for the witness to throw the first stones at the person sentenced to death.

Surely be put to death . . . certainly stone him — Mark the stress laid upon this command by the Lord. — The grievousness, the atrociousness, of the sins against the Second Commandment should be impressed upon the class.

THE SABBATH-BREAKER.

Gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day — According to the Lord's Sabbath-law the children of Israel were not to do any work whatever on that day of rest and worship, not even to prepare a meal. Ex. 20, 8—10 ("not do any work"). (Cat., Qu. 31. 32.)

It was not declared — See preceding paragraph.

Be surely put to death — The act of that man was not to be regarded as a minor transgression, but as setting at naught an explicit command of God. — While the Church of the New Testament must not apply temporal punishment to transgressors of God's Law, Christians should nevertheless learn from the story of this Sabbath-breaker what a great sin it is to despise preaching and God's Word. (Third Commandment. Cat., Qu. 33. 34.)

CATECHISM: Qu. 105; Second Commandment, Qu. 22; Third Commandment. Qu. 31—35.

HYMNS: 263; 266; 391, 3. 4; 8.

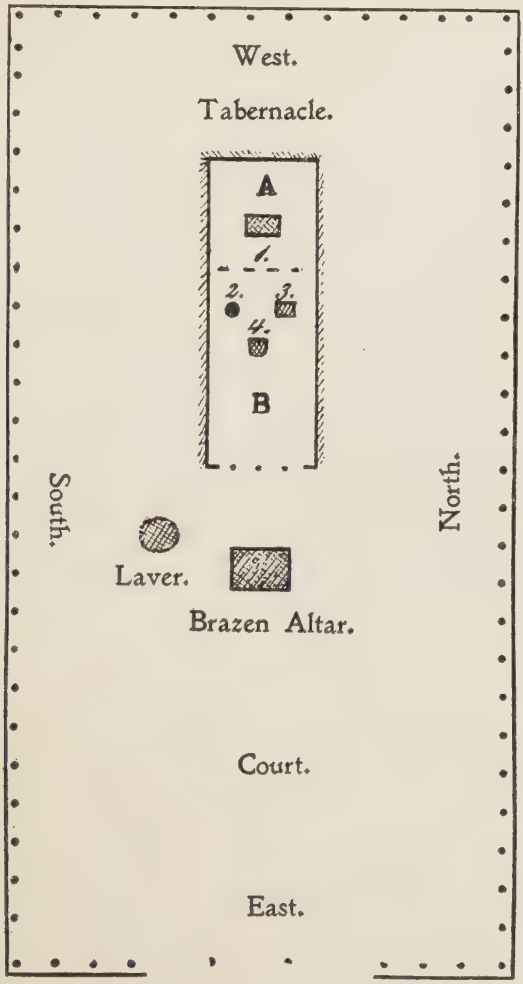
BIBLE READINGS: Heb. 4, 14—5, 10; Ps. 26; 27, 4—6.

32a. Prescribed Forms of Worship.

For the public worship of their Lord and King the Israelites had to have a certain place where they could meet for that purpose. As long as they were in the wilderness, their place of worship could not but be a tent, which could easily be removed, transported, and readily set up again. The Lord Himself gave Moses a pattern, or model, in strict accordance with which he constructed the tent, the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant.

THE SANCTUARY.

The *Tabernacle* — also called the Tabernacle of Testimony — was built with free-will offerings of the people by the "craftsmen" Bezaleel and Aholiab. It formed a rectangle, being 30 cubits long, 10 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high. The north, south, and west walls were built of boards 10 cubits high and 1½ cubits wide (20 boards each being needed for the north and south walls,

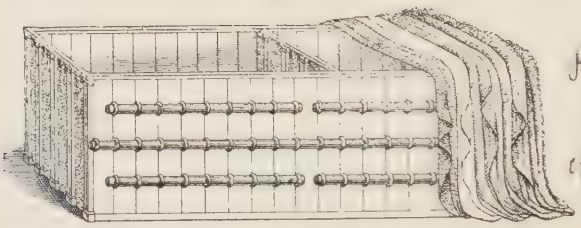


A. Holy of Holies. B. Holy Place.

1. Ark of the Covenant. 2. Candlestick. 3. Table of Show-bread. 4. Altar of Incense.

8 for the west wall), each of which was furnished with two tenons at its lower extremity, which fitted into silver sockets placed on the ground. At the top, at least, they were fastened together by bars of acacia wood (Bible, "shittim wood") run through rings of gold. The middle bar, which reached from end to end, was, properly speaking, the ridge-pole of the tent. All wood-work was overlaid with gold. The roof — not a flat, but a pitched roof, like that of an ordinary tent — was covered with goats'-hair cloth, rams' and badgers' skins. The lowest covering, which was seen from the inside, was woven with colored figures of cherubim. The Tabernacle had neither doors nor windows.

The interior of the Tabernacle was divided into two apartments, separated, each from the other, by a richly wrought curtain hanging entirely across, and reaching from the top to the bottom. This was called "the veil," or "second veil" (Heb. 9, 3),



FRAMEWORK OF THE TABERNACLE.

because the first entrance was also curtained. The outer apartment was called the Holy place, or Sanctuary, or the First Tabernacle, and the inner was the Second Tabernacle, or the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9, 28: "holiest of all").

1. The *Sanctuary* was 20 cubits long by 10 cubits wide and 10 cubits high. It contained the following. a) In the northern corner, near the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, was the golden *table of show-bread*, 2 cubits long by 1 cubit wide and 1½ cubits high. Twelve loaves of unleavened bread (baked of the very finest flour, of a square or oblong shape), according to the number of the tribes of Israel, were prepared anew every Sabbath and presented hot on the golden table. The old loaves were removed every Sabbath; they were to be eaten by no one but the priests, and only in the court of the Sanctuary. b) Across from the table of show-bread, in the southern corner, was the golden *candlestick*, about 3 cubits high, weighing about

86 pounds and computed to have been worth, at the modern value of gold, $30,000. It consisted of a shaft, or stem, with six branches. At the extremity of each branch there was a socket for the lamp, as well as at the top of the main shaft. — c) Near

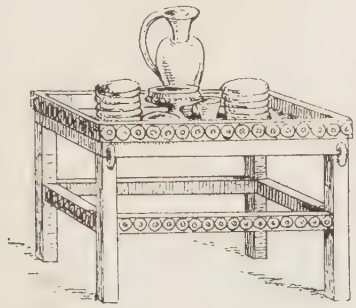
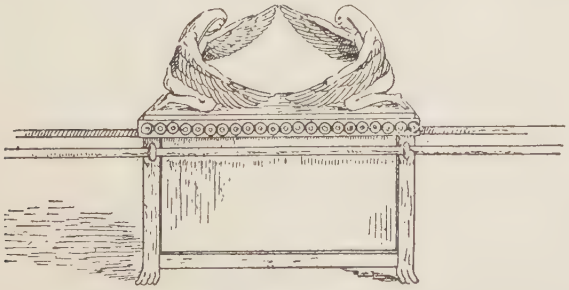


Table of Show-Bread in the Tabernacle.

the inmost veil, or curtain, in the middle, stood the *altar of incense* (or golden altar), one cubit long and wide by two cubits high, with four short projections at each upper corner, called "horns." The fire needed for the burning of incense had to be taken from the altar of burnt offering in a golden fire-pan. Only the priests were permitted to burn incense, which they did at

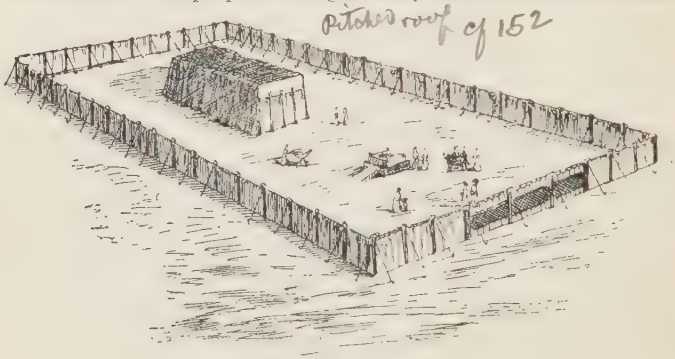


Ark of the Covenant.

about 9 o'clock in the morning (morning sacrifice) and at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon (evening sacrifice), while the people, who were standing in the court, offered up their prayers.

2. The *Holy of Holies* was 10 cubits each way. Here was the *Ark of the Covenant*, 3 feet 9 inches in length and 2 feet 3 inches in width and height, and made of shittim (acacia) wood. It was

surmounted by the *mercy-seat*, which served the purpose of a cover, or lid, to the ark. On each end of the mercy-seat was placed a golden image representing a cherub, facing inward, and bending forward over the ark. Above the mercy-seat the Lord communed with Moses. Ex. 25, 22. The Ark of the Covenant contained: 1) a golden pot, in which three quarts of manna were preserved, Ex. 16, 33; 2) Aaron's rod, which at different places miraculously budded and blossomed and yielded fruit, Num. 17, 8; 3) the tables of the testimony, the tables of the Ten Commandments, written with the finger of God (therefore also called "Ark of the Testimony"). The Ark of the Covenant was always borne in advance of the people as long as they were in the wilderness.



Tabernacle and the Outer Court.

3. The Tabernacle was enclosed by the *court*, 100 cubits long by 50 cubits wide, and this was surrounded by canvas screens. Those of the Tabernacle were 5 cubits (about 8 feet) in height, and hung from brazen pillars, 8 feet apart, by hooks and fillets of silver. Twenty of these pillars were on each side and ten on each end. The space enclosed was 150 by 75 feet. The enclosure was broken only on the eastern side by the entrance, 30 feet wide, which was closed by a curtain of fine-twined linen with embroidered figures of cherubim. The pillars were kept firm by cords and tent-pins of bronze, their capitals were overlaid with silver, and they stood on bases of bronze. Ex. 27, 9—18. — In the center of the court was the *altar of burnt offering*, or "brazen altar," 5 cubits long by 3 cubits high. It was made of shittim (acacia) wood. It was hollow and overlaid with plates of brass. A grate or network of brass was also attached to it, either to hold the fire,

or to support a hearth of earth. On each corner there was a little horn of wood, overlaid with brass. Between the altar and the tent was the *brazen laver*. It contained water for the priests to wash their hands and feet, which ablution they were obliged to perform before offering sacrifice, on pain of death.

All of these parts of the Sanctuary were provided with rings at their sides as supports for the bars with which they were carried whenever Israel broke camp in the wilderness. The vessels of the Tabernacle proper (dishes, bowls, spoons, covers, etc.) were made of pure gold, those used in the court (ash-pans, fire-pans, shovels, basins, flesh-hooks, etc.) of brass. — The pitching, breaking, and carrying of the tent and Tabernacle, of the altars, the ark, and all the vessels of the Sanctuary had to be done by the priests. — The people were allowed to enter only the court, the sanctuary being reserved for the priests, who offered up the sacrifices there, and no one except the high priest was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies, and he only once a year, on the Great Day of Atonement.

The Ministers of the Sanctuary.

"Sanctify unto Me all the first-born," was the order the Lord gave Moses when Israel marched out of Egypt. Ex. 13, 2. The first-born male of every Jewish family and of all beasts was consecrated to God in commemoration of the judgment which God brought upon the first-born of Egypt. Later the Lord chose a whole tribe, the tribe of Levi, as ministers of the Sanctuary, while the first-born had to be redeemed with a sacrifice. Among the Levites, Aaron and his sons were selected as priests of the Lord, and one among these was the high priest. Hence the ministers of the Sanctuary were: the Levites, the priests, and the high priest.

1. The *Levites* were the priests' assistants. They were not allowed to offer sacrifice, to burn incense, to see the "holy things" until covered, etc.; but they marched nearer the ark than the people, they carried the sacred tents in parts, they pitched it again at halting-stations, etc.; they carried the sacred vessels, the hangings and curtains of the Tabernacle, and the boards and pillars. The humbler duties of the Sanctuary were consigned to them, such as watching the Temple, cleaning, locking, and unlocking it, preparing the show-bread, cleaning and polishing the holy vessels, lending a helping hand to the priests at the offering of the sacrifices, etc. In the time of David 24,000 were set apart

for the ordinary services, 6,000 for the teaching of the Law and the administration of justice, 4,000 as porters, and 4,000 as musicians. They were divided into courses, and they came up from the cities to the Sanctuary in regular rotation. Forty-eight cities, with one thousand cubits of the country surrounding, were appropriated for the residence and maintenance of the Levites. Besides these cities the Levites received a tithe of all produce, animal and vegetable; but of this they paid a tithe to the priests. Another tithe they received every third year. They wore no particular garments.

2. The *priests, i. e.,* those members of the tribe of Levi who were descendants of Aaron, had higher functions. When Korah rebelled against Moses and Aaron, the Lord publicly confirmed the right of priesthood as restricted to Aaron and his descendants by punishing all the rebels before the eyes of the people, as well as by a miracle, the budding rod. — The chief duty of the priests was to prepare and offer the daily, weekly, and monthly sacrifices, and such as were brought by individuals at the great annual festivals or on special occasions. But generally they conducted the public service, officiated at purifications, took care of the holy fire, etc. They had to keep up a perpetual fire on the altar of burnt offering. Theirs was the privilege, too, of pronouncing the benediction over the assembly of worshipers. In war they sounded the holy trumpets and carried the Ark of the Covenant. In peace they ministered as judges at various trials. They also expounded the Law to the people.

No mean requirements were made upon a priest. Certain bodily imperfections or blemishes disqualified a man, not for the order, but for performing the functions of the office; and after having been consecrated and having entered upon the duties of his office, his life lay under a stricter rule than that of the Levites or the laymen. During the time of their service in the Sanctuary they were not allowed to drink wine or other intoxicating liquors, nor dared they touch a corpse. They were consecrated to the priesthood with solemn rites. While they were doing service, they were obliged to wear the "holy garments." Lev. 16, 4. "The garments of a priest consisted of a white linen *tunic*, reaching from the neck to the ankles, with tight sleeves and held together around the waist with a *linen girdle*, with blue, purple, and scarlet embroidery. On the head he wore a kind of *tiara* [a hat with a high crown], formed by the foldings of a linen cloth, and of

a round, turbanlike shape." A priest was not allowed to wear a covering for his feet (sandals), nor the high priest, because they stood on holy ground while in the Sanctuary.

"For the maintenance of the priests thirteen cities with pasture grounds, situated in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, were set aside when the people settled in Canaan. To these was added one-tenth of the tithes paid to the Levites,

A Priest's Robe of Office. Robe of Office of High Priest.

a special tithe every third year, the redemption-money paid for the first-born of man and beast, and for men or things specially dedicated to the Lord, the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, a part of the spoil taken in war, and finally, when they were officiating, the show-bread and the flesh of the burnt offerings, peace-offerings, and trespass-offerings." As long as they were officiating, they lived in outbuildings connected with the Temple. They were divided into twenty-four courses, sixteen of the family of Eleazar and eight of the family of Ithamar. Each course was in attendance at the Sanctuary at least twice a year.

3. The *high priest* was permitted to perform the duties assigned to the ordinary priests, but his most solemn, peculiar, and exclusive duty was to officiate in the Holy of Holies on the Great Day of Atonement, on the tenth day of Tisri, in the early part of October, when he brought the great sin-offering for the people's sins and his own. Besides sacrificing, he had to go in before the Lord, adorned with Urim and Thummim (light and perfection), to inquire the will of the Lord. He was, in general, the overseer of the Temple, and at the time of the Lord presided over the Sanhedrin (the supreme council of the Jews). He was the spiritual head of all the people, even of such as were living in countries outside of Palestine.

The office of high priest was originally held for life. Beginning with the time of the Maccabees, however, it became a tool in the hands of the rulers of the land. This was particularly the case during the reign of the Herods, though only one high priest was permitted to officiate at the same time.

"The dress of the high priest was much more costly and magnificent than that of the inferior order of priests." Above the robe, to the hem of which golden bells were attached, because "his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the Holy Place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not," he wore the *ephod*, curiously wrought with gold wire and blue, purple, and scarlet thread. The ephod was a kind of embroidered girdle, which was brought from behind the neck over the shoulders, and, hanging down before, was put across the stomach, then carried around the waist, and served as a girdle to the tunic. Upon either shoulder was an *onyx stone*, on each of which were engraved the names of six of the tribes of Israel. Covering his chest was the *breastplate*, a piece of embroidered work about ten inches square, and made double. It was adorned with twelve precious stones. The two upper corners were fastened to the ephod and the two lower corners to the girdle. Beneath the breastplate — in order that it might be on the high priest's heart when he "went in before the Lord" — was the Urim and Thummim, the crowning glory of the Levite tribe, but nowhere described in Scripture. On the Day of Atonement the high priest's dress was very plain and simple, consisting only of plain linen, with a sash or girdle.

The *miter*, or head-dress, was formed of fine linen in circular folds, and inscribed in front, upon a plate of gold, were the words "Holiness to the Lord."

The Sacrifices.

The offerings were either bloody (when animals were sacrificed) or bloodless (when taken from the vegetable kingdom). *All offerings were types of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross.* The following animals might be used as offerings to the Lord: oxen (bullocks), sheep, lambs, goats, and doves. They must be without a blemish. From the vegetable kingdom wine, flour, etc., were set apart. There were five kinds of offerings: burnt offer-

The Brazen Altar, or Altar of Burnt Offering.

ings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, peace- or thank-offerings, and meat-offerings.

1. The *burnt offering* was offered in the morning and evening on the altar of burnt offering. After the priest had laid his hand on the head of the animal to be sacrificed, it was burned entire, and its blood was sprinkled against the altar. — But also each individual lay Israelite was to bring an offering from time to time and in this case was himself to lay his hand on the animal. The burning of the animal was to signify the faithful Israelite's complete devotion to God. — Such burnt offerings were already brought by Abel, Noah, and Abraham. Only male animals were sacrificed.

2. The *sin-offering* was brought when an individual or the whole nation had become guilty of a particular sin, either unawares or owing to ignorance. The blood of the animal was not only sprinkled upon the altar of burnt offering, but in some cases was also taken into the Holy Place and sprinkled against the curtain and the horns of the altar of incense. The skin, flesh, head, legs, and the "inwards" were taken to "a clean place without the camp" and there "burned with fire."

3. The *trespass-offering* was made for lesser offenses and trespasses of the divine Law and for partaking of other men's sins and impurities, such as omitting to report the using of profane language by some one in one's hearing, touching a carcass or a corpse, or a living person who was ceremoniously unclean, uttering an oath in an unguarded moment, etc. The trespass-offering was similar to the sin-offering, with the exception, however, that only the fat of the animal sacrificed was burned, the rest being given to the priests. Generally a ram was sacrificed. — Blood and fat no Israelite was permitted to eat.

4. *Thank-offerings* (also called peace-offerings) were brought as a token of gratitude for divine benefits received, or when a pious Israelite wished to dedicate something to the Lord, especially on festive occasions. They were on the order of the burnt offerings, with the exception that the animal sacrifice did not need to be a male species, and that, in addition to the fat, only certain parts had to be burned upon the altar. The rest of the meat of the animal was eaten by the person who brought the offering and by the members of his family. Such a religious meal was to typify the communion with Jehovah.

5. The *meat-offering* consisted of flour, or of cakes prepared with oil and frankincense. Generally the first-fruits were used as meat-offerings. The meat-offering was to be free from leaven and honey, but was to have salt. The frankincense, all of it, belonged to the Lord. Of the rest only a small portion was sacrificed, while the greater part was given to the priests as their share. A meat-offering was presented every day with the burnt offering and in connection therewith the *drink-offering*, which was, as it were, an appendage to some sacrifices, wine that had been consecrated to the Lord being used. — The first-fruits offered at Pentecost and at the Passover were called *wave-offerings;* those offered in harvest-time, *heave-offerings*.

Heb. 10, 14 tells us that Christ "by one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." No other sacrifice is needed now that Christ has "borne our sins in His own body on the tree." — "Christ, Thou art the sole oblation That I'll bring before my God," etc. (Hymn 83, 6.)

Religious Observances and Feasts.

1. *Daily Temple Service.* — Every morning and evening a one-year-old lamb was sacrificed as a burnt offering, $^1/_{10}$ ephah of wheat flour, with oil, as a meat-offering, and $^1/_4$ hin wine, as a drink-offering. Incense had to be burned on the golden altar, and in the evening the lamps must be dressed and lighted (Ex. 30, 7 f.), and the benediction was pronounced after each morning and evening sacrifice. Since David's time, who introduced both vocal and instrumental music, it was customary for the Levites to sing psalms, with accompaniment of various instruments, at the daily sacrifices.

2. *Services on the Sabbath-Day.* — The Israelites were commanded to celebrate the seventh day of the week in commemoration of the fact that God rested from the works of creation on that day (Gen. 2, 3), as well as of the miraculous delivery from the hands of their oppressors in Egypt (Deut. 5, 15), and as a type, or emblem, of the eternal rest in heaven (Heb. 4, 5). They refrained from all labor whatsoever on that day. — Besides the daily sacrifice two additional lambs were sacrificed as burnt offerings on the Sabbath. During the ceremonies of the sacrifice the priests and Levites sang and played, and the great number of worshipers who would gather at the house of the Lord joined them in singing to the Lord. After the benediction the people would enter the synagog connected with the Temple, where a portion of the Law (Torah, the five books of Moses) would be read and expounded, which was followed by the reading of passages from the prophets. The service would be closed with prayer. Alms were also gathered for the poor. At noon the people would go home. Towards evening they would return to the Temple for the closing service of the day, which was similar to the one in the morning.

3. *Feast of the New Moon.* — This feast was celebrated with special sacrifices at the beginning of every month. Besides the daily sacrifice "two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without spot" were offered. Num. 28, 11. It was

a day of rejoicing. A formal announcement of the new moon was made by the sound of trumpets and beacon-fires. — On the first day of the seventh month they celebrated the *Feast of Trumpets.* Lev. 23, 24 f.; Num. 29, 1—6. It was, at the same time, their *New Year's Day.*

4. *Annual Feasts.* — a) The *Passover* was celebrated in commemoration of the liberation of Israel from the Egyptian bondage, particularly of the "passing over" of their families when the destroying angel smote the first-born of Egypt. It was also their Harvest Feast. The celebration began at even of the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan), and on the fifteenth the seven days' Feast of Unleavened Bread began, the first and last of which were peculiarly holy, like the Sabbath. On the 16th of Nisan the first-fruits were offered. (Regarding the fulfilment of the Old Testament Passover see 1 Cor. 5, 6—8; 10, 16—21.) — b) *Pentecost,* or the *Feast of Weeks,* was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the Passover (hence the name Pentecost). It was originally simply a day of public thanksgiving for the harvest, which in Palestine fell between the Passover and Pentecost. The festival was kept only one day, and the principal rite consisted in the offering of two loaves made of the finest flour of the last crop's wheat. After the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews it was celebrated mainly to commemorate the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, which occurred on the fiftieth day after the feast of the Passover in Egypt. — c) *Feast of Tabernacles.* This feast was designed to commemorate the long tent-life of the Israelites in the wilderness. It began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (October) and lasted eight days — seven for the feast and one day for a "holy convocation," a Sabbath of rest. It was the most joyous of all the Jewish festivals. As long as the feast lasted, the people dwelt in booths. On the first and last days there was a "holy convocation." — Ex. 34, 23 f. we read God's command to Israel: "Thrice in the year shall all your men-children [all members of the male sex, beginning with the twelfth year] appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel," that is to say, at the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. For that reason they were called assembly festivals. On these three festivals no one should appear empty before the Lord (Ex. 23, 15), *i. e.,* without bringing some offering. They were festivals of rejoicing. On Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles they should even let the stranger (non-Israelite) celebrate with them. — d) The *Great Day of Atonement*

was a feast quite in contrast with the above-named festivals. It was "the only Jewish fast-day, the annual day of humiliation. It was kept five days before the Feast of Tabernacles, on the tenth day of Tisri, in the early part of October. It lasted from sunset to sunset and was kept as a solemn Sabbath. Once a year, on this day, the high priest, alone, entered the Holy of Holies. This was the preparation. It was ordained that he should bathe himself, and then dress in holy white linen. He was then to bring forward his sacrifices, which must be his purchases — a young bullock for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt offering. These he offered for himself and his family. Besides these he brought forward two goats for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt offering. These, being for the benefit of the people, were paid for out of the public treasury. The two goats were then led up to the entrance of the Tabernacle, and lots cast upon them, one lot marked 'For Jehovah,' the other, 'For Azazel' (probably the evil spirit). The high priest offered the bullock and carried live coals in a censer from the altar, with a handful of incense, into the Holy of Holies. There he sprinkled the blood with his finger upon the mercy-seat, eastward, and before it seven times. He then killed the goat 'For Jehovah' and sprinkled his blood in the same manner. Over the goat 'For Azazel' the sins of the people were confessed by the high priest, and then it was sent away 'by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.' [It was allowed to escape, hence, scapegoat.] The ceremony was now over. Accordingly, the high priest again bathed, put on his usual garments, and offered the two rams." (Schaff's *Bible Dictionary.*) As long as the high priest was in the Holy of Holies, no one was allowed to enter the Temple. By the sacrifices on this day the sins of the people were atoned for one year. Of Christ's sacrifice (prefigured by the Old Testament offerings) we read Heb. 9, 12: "By His own blood He entered in *once* into the Holy Place, having obtained *eternal* redemption for us."

To the above-named festivals there was added, later, the *Purim Feast*, celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Adar (March) in commemoration of the preservation of the Jewish people, by means of Mordecai and Esther, from the massacre ordered by Haman; also the *Feast of Dedication*, instituted to commemorate the purging of the Temple and the rebuilding of the altar after Judas Maccabaeus had driven out the Syrians (B. C. 164). In general, it was kept like the Feast of Tabernacles.

It was a time of rejoicing. It began on the 25th day of Chisleu (December). It is mentioned John 10, 22.

5. *Two Festival Years.* They lasted an entire year.

a. The *Sabbath of the Seventh Year* (Year of Rest, Sabbath of Rest, Sabbatical Year) was celebrated every seventh year. All agricultural labor was to be suspended, and spontaneous productions to be left to the poor, the traveler, and the wild beasts. There was also to be a general release. No debt to a Jew was allowed to stand, but must be forgiven.

b. The *Year of Jubilee* was to be observed every fiftieth year. It commenced on the great *Day of Atonement*. It restored individuals, families, and communities, as far as possible, to the same situation they occupied at the beginning of the fifty years. All servants of Hebrew origin were set free, all pledges were given up, and the inheritances which had been alienated came back to the hands of the owners. — We, too, have been liberated from a bondage, the bondage of sin and Satan, and we, too, shall have a year of jubilee, but one that will never end, to wit, in heaven.

The Feasts and the Sacrifices Offered Thereon.

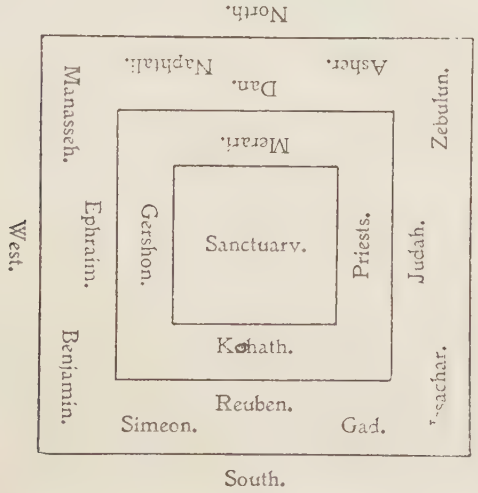
	L.	B.	R.	L.†	G.	H.C.[1])
Week-day	2	—	—	—	—	—
Sabbath	2	—	—	2	—	*
New Moon	2	2	1	7	1	—
Passover, 15th	2	2	1	7	1	*
" 16th	2	2	1	7	1	—
" 17th	2	2	1	7	1	—
" 18th	2	2	1	7	1	—
" 19th	2	2	1	7	1	—
" 20th	2	2	1	7	1	—
" 21st	2	2	1	7	1	*
Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)	2	2	1	7	1	*
Feast of Trumpets (New Year)	2	1	1	7	1	*
Day of Atonement	2	1	1	7	1+1	*

1) L. = lambs; daily sacrifice, also on Sabbath- and feast-days. B. = bullocks. R. = rams. L.† = lambs for the festal sacrifice proper. G. = goats. H. C. = holy convocation (the asterisks signify that on those days complete Sabbath quiet must be observed).

		L.	B.	R.	L.†	G.	H.C.
Feast of Tabernacles,	15th	2	13	2	14	1	*
" "	16th	2	12	2	14	1	—
" "	17th	2	11	2	14	1	—
" "	18th	2	10	2	14	1	—
" "	19th	2	9	2	14	1	—
" "	20th	2	8	2	14	1	—
" "	21st	2	7	2	14	1	—
" "	22d	2	1	1	7	1	*

Order of Encampment during the Sojourn in the Wilderness.

According to divine command the children of Israel, while in the desert, were to encamp "round about the Tabernacle," the Levites doing, as it were, sentinel duty. The following diagram shows the order of encampment prescribed by the Lord Himself.



All divisions (each division comprising three tribes) were to encamp each by its own *standard*, and each tribe was to have, besides, the *ensign of its father's house.* (See Num. 2, 2 ff.)

33. The Spies and Korah's Rebellion. Num. 13-16

At Mount Sinai the Israelites remained almost a year. During that time the Tabernacle was built, and all arrangements were perfected toward instituting the Temple-service in accordance with divine directions. Aaron was anointed high priest, and his sons were duly installed as priests. Toward the close of the year's sojourn, God commanded Israel to celebrate the Passover. Then they broke camp, moving in a northerly direction, into the Wilderness of Paran.

Fig.

Sending of the Spies.

Search — Find out what kind of country it was.

Zin — The Wilderness of Zin was a part of the Arabian Desert south of Palestine. It joined the territory of Judah and was west of Idumea. (Map 2.)

Brook of Eshcol — Most likely between Bethlehem and Hebron. (Map 3.)

Cluster of grapes — Even to-day bunches of grapes weighing twelve to eighteen pounds are said to be found in Southern Palestine.

Pomegranates — A beautiful fruit of the size of an orange, with a hard rind and filled with pulp of a highly grateful flavor, the juice of which was made into wine.

Figs — One of the main fruits of Palestine, found in a wild state and also cultivated. The tree does not grow to a great height, but throws out a profusion of very spreading branches covered with five-lobed leaves, so that it becomes a beautiful natural arbor. See 1 Kings 4, 25.

Floweth with milk and honey — They had to admit that the Lord's words regarding the productiveness of the country were true.

Cities . . . walled — According to Deut. 1, 28, the spies spoke of the cities as being "walled up to heaven." The cities were strongly fortified, and they had no instruments of warfare for carrying on siege operations; but had not the Lord, who had performed such astounding miracles for them, promised to "thrust out the enemy from before them"? (First Commandment: lack of trust in God.)

Giants — A race of large stature living in the mountainous country around Hebron and toward the Mediterranean. (Map 3.)

As grasshoppers — A shameful exaggeration, uttered with a purpose. They had lost faith in God Almighty.

The People Sin.

Cried — Lamented and made a great uproar. A whole night they carried on that way. Num. 14, 1.

Murmured — They gave vent to the bitter feelings in their hearts against Moses and Aaron.

Let us make a captain — They wanted to depose the God-given leader Moses and elect one of their own choice who would do their bidding.

Return into Egypt — Suddenly they had forgotten the well-nigh unbearable conditions under which they had moaned and groaned in the land of Pharaoh. (Ingratitude — a sin against the First Commandment.)

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces — They implored the Lord not to punish the people as they had deserved, but to hinder them from carrying out their desperate plan.

Caleb — Of the tribe of Judah. A man with a strong faith. He and Joshua had the courage of facing the rebellious mob, sharply rebuking it, and calling upon it to trust in the Lord Jehovah.

Delight in us — If we act so that the Lord will be pleased with us, we shall possess the land as He has promised unto us.

Rebel — In rebelling against Moses, their God-given leader, they rebelled against the Lord Himself.

Stone them — Instead of listening to good counsel, they became all the more enraged.

The Punishment.

The glory of the Lord — The Lord revealed Himself in His majesty, appearing in a bright cloud, in order to strike terror to the souls of the rebellious people.

As truly as I live — The greatest oath that God can make — by His own life, His own eternal existence. Heb. 6, 13: "Because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself." — The following words were a threat at which the rebellious ought to have shuddered: —

All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord — He wanted to punish the people so that all nations would hear of it and be compelled to acknowledge that "He can save and can destroy."

Tempted Me . . . ten times — See Ex. 14, 11; 15, 24; 16, 2; 17, 2; 32, 2; 33, 4; Num. 11, 1. 4—6. 10 ff.; 14, 1.

Your little ones — The very ones who, they said, would become a prey to hunger or wild beasts (Num. 14, 31) His almighty power would preserve and bring into the Promised Land (the children should not bear the iniquity of their fathers, Ezek. 18, 20), though they would have to wander in the wilderness forty years. But all the adults ("from twenty years old and upward"), every one with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, were to die during their forty-year sojourn in the wilderness and would not be permitted to enter the land which they had despised. See Num. 14, 33, where the Lord contemptuously said their "carcasses" would

be "wasted in the wilderness," like a caravan beast that falls exhausted by the wayside in the lonely desert. (Close of Commandments: "a jealous God"; "therefore we should fear His wrath.")

THE REBELLION.

Korah — A cousin of Moses and Aaron.

Dathan and Abiram — Two of the leading men of the tribe of Reuben.

Princes of the congregation — Influential men from the various tribes.

Gathered themselves together — Formed a conspiracy.

Against Moses and against Aaron — A political and an ecclesiastical rebellion; the former against the leader, or ruler, of the people (Moses); the latter against the temporal head of the Israelitish Church (Aaron).

Wherefore lift ye up yourselves — A brazen lie; for the Lord Himself had called both Moses and Aaron to their high offices. — Dathan and Abiram aspired to the leadership of the people, claiming, no doubt, to be entitled to this honor because Reuben was the first-born son of the patriarch Jacob. — Korah and "his company" (Num. 16, 5), a number of his relatives, were not satisfied with the inferior services he and the other Levites had to perform in the Tabernacle; they said they had just as much right to offer sacrifices as Aaron and his sons. (Pride, haughtiness, arrogance; sins against the sum of the Second Table. Cat., Qu. 36. 37; 307: "the *called* ministers of Christ"; Heb. 5, 4. See Dietrich's Cat., Qu. 515 ff.)

Moses . . . fell upon his face — He humbly entreated the Lord to stand by him in this severe trial.

Who are His — The Lord will come down in His wrath and show you and all your fellow-rebels whom He has chosen to be the priests in His Sanctuary and consecrated unto Himself for the priesthood. It was a fair warning to repent ere it would be too late.

Against the Lord — Seemingly a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, but actually a revolt against God Almighty. Luke 10, 16.

We will not come up — They accused Moses of being a usurper of sovereignty, a tyrant.

Consume them — The Lord threatened, as He had done once before, to exterminate all the people.

They fell upon their faces — Moses and Aaron interceded for the rebellious congregation. (Cp. the intercession of Abraham, Lesson 9.)

THE REBELS PUNISHED.

Speak unto the congregation — The Lord graciously heard the intercessory pleadings of Moses and Aaron. (Cat., Qu. 214; 1 Tim. 2, 1 ("intercessions").

Touch nothing of theirs — In obeying the divine command, they would show that they would have nothing whatever to do with such open and obstinate enemies of the Lord — in effect, an act of excommunication. (Cat., Qu. 310.)

Know that the Lord hath sent me — A public, indisputable testimonial of his divine calling. — In this hour of most severe trial Moses again showed himself a hero of faith. He was absolutely certain of his divine calling and fully confident that God would make it evident that he was not an impostor.

The ground clave asunder — Suddenly there was a cleft, a breach, in the earth, a yawning abyss, where the rebels stood, and in a moment they went down with a crash — into the abyss of eternal death. Their awful shrieks were heard by the terrified congregation. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. 10, 31. (Cat., Qu. 82. 83.) — The *children* of Korah "died not" in this catastrophe, Num. 26, 11; and their descendants, known as "the sons of Korah," in the days of David, became a family of singers and inspired psalm-writers. (Cat., Qu. 86; Ezek. 18, 20: "The son shall *not,*" etc.)

Consumed the two hundred and fifty men — who had arrogantly offered incense, Num. 16, 35, and thus encroached upon the functions of the priesthood.

His rod budded, etc. — Not only did the Lord mete out a most dreadful punishment to those who had rebelled

against the two leaders whom He had chosen, but in the case of Aaron, the high priest, He performed a miracle in order publicly to confirm His choice. He commanded Moses to request the "prince" (ruler, governor, as it were) of each of the twelve tribes to bring him a rod (a twig of some tree), to write or carve the name of each prince on his respective rod, and to lay them all in the Tabernacle, "in the Most Holy Place, before the Ark of the Covenant." "The man's rod," the Lord said, "whom I shall choose [to be the high priest] shall blossom." And, lo, the next morning "the rod of Aaron . . . was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" — all in one night! — This divine miracle silenced all opposition and was a wonderful confirmation of Aaron's priesthood.

The rod was kept in the Ark of God — As a testimony for future generations that Aaron and his descendants were to be the priests of God in His Sanctuary until the great High Priest should appear. Heb. 9, 4.

CATECHISM: Fourth Commandment, Qu. 42. "Of Civil Government." "What the Hearers Owe to Their Pastors": 1 Tim. 5, 17. 18; 1 Thess. 5, 12. 13; Heb. 13, 17.

HYMNS: 252, 10; 21, 6; 544, 3. 4.

BIBLE READINGS: Heb. 3, 7—19; Num. 17, 1—13; Rom. 13, 1—7.

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34. The Water of Meribah and the Brazen Serpent.

The forty years of desert wanderings with which the Lord had threatened to punish the people when they had refused to enter the Land of Promise after they had been shown that it was really a land of milk and honey, were past. A new generation had replaced the old one, which was "overthrown in the wilderness." 1 Cor. 10, 5. It was not as stubborn as the men and women who were fathers and mothers when they left Egypt, and yet these children of theirs were far from being saints, as the two instances recorded in our lesson will show.

THE WATER OF STRIFE.

Desert of Zin — Where they had encamped thirty-eight years before. (Map 2.)

Kadesh — Sometimes called Kadesh-barneah: on the southern frontier of Canaan. (Map 2.)

Miriam died there — She, too, had at one time shown jealousy and discontent, together with her brother Aaron, whereupon she had been punished with leprosy, from which, however, she was healed after Moses had interceded for her. Num. 12. On account of her rebellious act she, though an honored prophetess, was not to see the Promised Land. — She was probably about 130 years old at the time of her death.

No water — It was the dry season, in midsummer.

Chode with Moses — Found fault with him, reproached, upbraided him. They forgot what God had done for them in the wilderness for forty years. (Ingratitude — sin against First Commandment.)

Fell upon their faces — Humbly pleading with the Lord not to deal with the ungrateful people according to their deserts.

The glory of the Lord appeared — It flashed from the cloud in great brilliancy. The Lord desired to show the people that He was on the side of His servant Moses.

The rod — The same shepherd's staff with which Moses had already performed so many miracles in the name of the Lord.

The assembly — The assembled congregation.

Speak ye unto the rock — In the name of the Lord, Moses was to command the rock to yield water.

Must we fetch you, etc. — Ps. 106, 33 we read that, because the people provoked the spirit of Moses, "he spake unadvisedly with his lips." The *Weimar Bible* commentators remark — 1. that Moses and Aaron did not, as they had been commanded to do, address the rock, but the people; 2. that they failed to mention the name of the Lord; 3. that,

by putting what they spoke in the form of a question, they showed that, instead of implicitly trusting the promise of the Lord, they began to waver and doubt on account of Israel's murmuring and unbelief; 4. that they smote the rock twice in place of speaking to it. Moses, that great hero of faith, in this instance became weak in faith.

Came out abundantly — In view of the people's great sin and Moses' spiritual staggering God's mercy and loving-kindness loom up all the greater.

Ye believed Me not — He who searches the heart knew that Moses and Aaron had acted as they had done from lack of faith.

Rebelled — Mark well — unbelief, even doubt, is, in effect, rebellion against God. (First Commandment: "trust in God above all things.")

Ye shall not, etc. — Though we can well understand that Moses became "wearied and faint in his mind" (Heb. 12, 3), having had to deal with a stubborn, ungrateful people so many years, and though his conduct at this occasion was a sin of weakness, yet the Lord punished him severely; for it was a sad disappointment for him not to be permitted to enter the Land of Promise. But it was only a temporal punishment. He died a child of God and entered the heavenly Canaan.

Aaron's Death.

Mount Hor — Near the city of Petra and near the boundary line of Edom. (Map 2.)

Aaron died there — Moses, at the command of God, stripped Aaron of his high-priestly garments and gave them to Aaron's son Eleazar, who thereby was made his father's successor. In the presence of his son and his brother Moses, Aaron died on the top of the mountain at the age of 123 years. — To this day the Bedouins show travelers what they claim to be Aaron's burial-place.

Mourned . . . thirty days — To honor the memory of a great one in Israel. In general the ceremonies of mourning were observed only seven days.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

To compass the land of Edom — From Kadesh, Israel had intended to march through the country of the Edomites and thence northward to the river Jordan, which they would then cross to enter the Land of Promise. But the king of the Edomites — the Edomites, being descendants of Esau (Edom), still harbored all the old hatred against the people whose ancestor was Jacob — would not permit them to pass through his country, and consequently Israel was compelled to make quite a long detour to reach the coveted goal. (Map 2. Edom.)

Much discouraged — Israel became indignant at Moses, for it seemed as though they would never get through marching in the wilderness, and therefore there was a new outbreak of anger and disgust.

Spake against God and against Moses — Impudent and blasphemous words.

Our soul loatheth this light bread — We are tired of eating manna; we are disgusted with it; we don't care to see it any longer.

Fiery serpents — Venomous serpents, called fiery probably from the burning which followed the deadly bite. — The Holy Spirit tells us through St. Paul that these murmuring Israelites tempted Christ, the Son of God, who guided and protected them throughout their wanderings, and for that reason were destroyed by serpents. 1 Cor. 10, 9.

We have sinned — The new generation, not as stiff-necked as their sires, confessed their sins when they had aroused the wrath of the Lord and asked Moses to be their mediator and intercessor with God.

Brazen serpent — A serpent of copper or bronze resembling the venomous serpents which were causing such destruction of life among the people.

On a pole — That it might be seen from a distance. — Christ alluded to this serpent, and His words plainly show us that the brazen serpent was a type of Him who was to be lifted up "on the tree" and who thus "bare our sins." John

3, 14; 1 Pet. 2, 24. Whoever, in obedience to the divine command, beheld the serpent of brass was saved from temporal death. "Whosoever believeth in Him [Christ] shall not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 15. 16.

Note. — This brazen serpent was preserved by Israel as a memorial of the deliverance granted through it by God. But when, in the days of King Hezekiah, the people began to regard it as an idol, burning incense to it, he caused it to be broken in pieces. 2 Kings 18, 4.

Catechism: First Commandment; Seventh Petition; Second Article.

Hymns: 369, 2; 370, 4—6; 375, 3; 201, 9. 10; 58, 3.

Bible Readings: Ps. 46; 73, 23—28; 31, 5; John 3, 14—21; Lam. 3, 22—33.

35. Balaam.

After the children of Israel had been miraculously delivered from the fiery serpents, they continued their journey southward till they came to the Gulf of Akabah, the eastern branch of the Red Sea. Then they went around the base of the mountains to the east and journeyed northward in a circuitous route around Mount Seir and the Dead Sea till they reached the Plains of Moab opposite Jericho, on the east side of Jordan. (Maps 2 and 3.) To the south were the Moabites, within whose borders the Israelites were encamped. On the north were the Amorites, who dwelt in the well-watered region extending northward along the Jordan beyond the Sea of Galilee. This was in the autumn and winter of the fortieth year of their wanderings. While they were encamped here, the event occurred of which we hear in the following lesson.

Balak's Bribe.

Moab was sore afraid — The fears of the Moabites were aroused by a report of Israel's victories over Sihon and Og. Num. 21, 32—35. (Map 3: Moab.)

Balak = "The Spoiler."

Balaam = "The Glutton." He was a native of Pethor, a village in Mesopotamia. Num. 22, 5. He had a great reputation as a prophet, or soothsayer. He seems to have had a fair knowledge of the true God and knew what He had done for His chosen people. One of the most detestable characters in Holy Writ.

Curse me this people — "Afflict them with an evil which will render them powerless." Balak feared Israel, though without reason.

Whom thou blessest, etc. — He had great confidence in the supernatural powers of that famous soothsayer.

The elders of Moab and Midian — The Midianites, whose territory is believed to have extended from the Sinaitic Peninsula to the Euphrates, joined the Moabites in seeking the destruction of Israel. (Map 2.)

Thou shalt not, etc. — Instead of sending the messengers of Balak home indignant at the request put to him, Balaam asked them to stay overnight until he could have asked the Lord what he should do. "The rewards of divination" (Num. 22, 7) were a temptation he could not withstand. He "loved the wages of unrighteousness." 2 Pet. 2, 15. (Cat., Qu. 59: "covetousness within our hearts"; 1 Tim. 6, 6—10; Qu. 75.)

They are blessed — He whom the Lord blesses "shall be blessed forever" (1 Chron. 18, 27), and even the hosts of hell cannot turn this divine blessing into a curse. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 33, 4.)

Tarry ye here this night — These words show that, notwithstanding Balaam's sanctimonious reply to the second dispatch of messengers, the glitter of gold dazzled his eyes and captured his heart. He hoped to "persuade" the Lord, as it were, to permit him to do Balak's bidding. His heart was "not right in the sight of God." Acts 8, 21.

Go with them — God spoke these words in His wrath.

The Animal's Rebuke.

The Angel of the Lord — The Son of God.

The ass saw the Angel — The dumb brute saw what Balaam failed to see. Avarice blinded his eyes.

She thrust herself unto the wall — Trying to pass safely by the Angel, who was holding the sword in His hand.

She fell down under Balaam — It was impossible for her to proceed because the Angel of the Lord blocked the extremely narrow passage between the walls of the vineyard at this place.

The Lord opened the mouth of the ass — (Here we clearly see that the Angel who "stood in the way against Balaam" was the Lord Himself, the Son of God.) He performed a miracle to show Balaam how greatly displeased He was with him; for He knew that Balaam intended to comply with the request of Balak. The dumb, irrational brute spoke "with man's voice" and "forbade the madness of the prophet." 2 Pet. 2, 16. — With God nothing is impossible. (First Article: "I believe in God the Father Almighty.")

I have sinned — A hypocritical confession, uttered only in a moment of extreme terror. In reality he did not wish to return. See Num. 22, 34: "If it displease Thee." He knew well enough that the Lord did not want him to do what Balak demanded of him. (Cat., Qu. 313; Is. 26, 10.)

Go with the men — Because Balaam's heart was hardened, the Lord, in His anger, gave him up to follow the lust of his heart. Rom. 1, 24. He warned him, however, against saying anything but what He would command him to speak.

Balaam's Prophecy.

The high place of Baal — A height from which he was able to overlook the millions of God's people encamped in the plains. Called "high place of Baal" because Balak and his people offered sacrifices here to that idol.

The utmost part — A comprehensive bird's-eye view of Israel was to be had from that height.

His parable — Prophetic utterance.

How shall I curse — He would like to have done so to please Balak and to obtain a princely reward, but feared the wrath of God.

God is not . . . should lie — "All men are liars" (Ps. 116, 11), but it is impossible for Him whose Word is truth (John 17, 17) to speak an untruth.

That He should repent — God absolutely cannot do wrong and therefore never needs to be sorry for anything He has said or done. "The Lord is righteous in all His works." Ps. 145, 17. See Dan. 9, 14; Ps. 119, 137.

Hath He said . . . not do it? — He keeps all His promises. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 33, 4: "His works are done in truth," *i. e.*, "in faithfulness, the fulfilment always agreeing with His promises," *Pop. Com.*)

I cannot reverse it — He does not say: I do not wish to reverse it.

A Star out of Jacob — "As the symbol of the power and majesty of a great Ruler." — Against his will, obeying the Lord who had put these words into his mouth, only because he feared to disobey His voice, Balaam here uttered a most beautiful Messianic prophecy. See Matt. 2, 1—13: the star seen by the Wise Men. 2 Pet. 1, 19; Rev. 2, 28; 22, 16: Jesus called the Day-star and Morning Star, respectively.

A scepter shall rise — A scepter was a wooden staff, or wand, five to six feet long, usually overlaid with gold or decorated with golden rings, with an ornamented point. It was borne in the hands of kings as a token of power. — The Messiah, too, shall have a scepter (see Gen. 49, 10), *i. e.*, be a mighty King — the King of kings and Lord of lords. Rev. 17, 14; 19, 16. (Cat., Qu. 142.)

Smite the corners of Moab — "Strike down its people on both sides."

Have dominion — People of all nations of the earth would worship the Messiah as their Lord and Savior. — Show briefly how this promise has been fulfilled since the days of the apostles.

Balaam returned to his place — Not, however, without doing spiritual harm to the people of God. He advised the Moabites (Num. 31, 16) to seduce Israel to the sin of forni-

cation (Num. 25, 1—5), in consequence of which a plague broke out, killing 24,000 (Num. 25, 9), 23,000 in one day (1 Cor. 10, 8). — Balaam himself was slain in a battle fought by Israel against the Midianites. Num. 31, 8.

Catechism: Qu. 26 ("that useth divination"); Qu. 75 ("love of money"); Qu. 28 (call upon God's name to bless our fellow-men).

Hymns: 391, 3; 334, 4; 335, 3; 363, 1; 103, 1.

Bible Readings: Deut. 18, 10—12; 1 Tim. 6, 6—10; Ps. 129; 115, 12—18.

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36. Moses' Last Days and Death.

As we heard in the second last lesson, Moses was not to lead the children of Israel into the Land of Promise. Though this must have been a sore disappointment to him, yet he humbled himself under the mighty hand of God and continued faithfully to perform the duties of his high office until his death. In particular he admonished the people to remain true to the Lord and to keep His commandments, pointing out both the blessings and the curse that would follow upon either obedience or disobedience. Above all, however, he did not fail to tell them that in God's own time that Great Prophet would come who would proclaim the most glorious message of salvation through His fulfilment of the Law in the sinners' stead and atoning for their sins.

Moses at the Border of Canaan.

By Jordan — East of the river, opposite Jericho. It was in the last month of the fortieth year of the Exodus, end of February or early in March.

Mountain Abarim — A mountain range east of Jordan. Nebo, Peor, and Pisgah belong to this range. (Map 3.)

Gathered unto thy people — Holy Writ frequently uses this phrase when speaking of the departure of those who died in the faith. An Old Testament testimony of the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting.

Because ye trespassed, etc. — See Lesson 34, p. 173.

Set a man over the congregation — He asked the Lord to appoint his successor to prevent dissatisfaction and, possibly, rebellion after his death.

Joshua . . . in whom is the Spirit — Joshua had shown himself to be a devout servant of Jehovah, "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," a faithful servant of Moses, and endowed with the talents needed for leadership.

Lay thine hand upon him — As a public token of his having been divinely called to leadership. He was to be installed into his important office with due ceremonies. All Israel was to invoke God's blessing upon the new leader.

Give him a charge — In the presence of all the people, Moses was to give the children of Israel into Joshua's charge in the name of Jehovah, calling upon him to assume the leadership in his stead and to exhort all the people to obey their new leader.

Moses' Farewell.

Hear, O Israel — Since the Lord had told Moses that his work was now done, and that he was shortly to depart this life, he gathered all the people about him and, probably while standing on an eminence, repeated to them all the commandments, statutes, judgments, and ordinances which the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

One Lord — All the heathen nations round about them worshiped many gods (idols). Remember, Israel, there is only *one* God and Lord of heaven and earth! (First Commandment. Cat., Qu. 105.)

Love the Lord — That is "the first and great [*the* great, or greatest] commandment," Christ said to the Pharisees. Matt. 22, 38. (Cat., Qu. 9.)

In thine heart — Not only on their lips. (Cat., Qu. 27; Matt. 15, 8. Qu. 15; Matt. 10, 37. Qu. 16; Ps. 73, 25. 26.)

Teach them diligently unto thy children — "Bring them up in the nurture [the Word of God is to be the children's daily nourishment] and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6, 4.

His blessings . . . His curses — Deut. 28 records the blessings the Lord promised His people if they would obey Him, and the curses threatened in case of disobedience. (Close of Commandments.)

Raise up unto thee a Prophet — The Great Prophet, the Messiah, greater than Moses. To His Word (the saving Gospel) all that desire to be saved must listen with a believing heart. "Hear ye Him!" God the Father said on the day of Christ's transfiguration on the mount. Matt. 17, 5. (Cat., Qu. 140.)

From the midst of thy brethren — The Messiah was to be born from a descendant of Judah. Gen. 49, 10.

Moses' farewell address contains: 1) an exhortation to worship only the true God; 2) the greatest commandment; 3) promises of blessings and proclamations of evil (curses); 4) a Messianic prophecy.

Moses' Death.

Nebo — A peak of about 640 feet above the Plateau of Moab, which is 3,500 feet above the Jordan. (Map 3.)

Pisgah — Another peak of the Abarim mountain range.

The Lord showed him all the land — Travelers assure us that from these peaks "the finest view . . . of the land of Canaan" can be obtained "unto the utmost sea," the Mediterranean. — Moses surely regarded it as a great divine favor to be privileged to get a general bird's-eye view of the Land of Promise.

Which I sware, etc. — And I shall keep My promise. (Cat., Qu. 104: "faithful"; Ps. 33, 4.)

Thou shalt not go over thither — This is the third time the Lord told Moses this. He was to be reminded again and again of his great sin of unbelief and the offense he had therewith given the people; this would prompt him all the more to seek grace and forgiveness.

Moses . . . died — In sight of Canaan, which he was not to enter, but in the blessed hope of the heavenly Canaan. He died as "the servant of the Lord" — an honorable title.

Simeon: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." Luke 2, 29.

He buried him — A most singular distinction! Honored after his death as no other mortal before or after him.

No man knoweth his sepulcher — His grave, or tomb, if known, might have become an object of superstitious idolatry. — St. Jude says in his epistle that the archangel Michael disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. The Lord, taking his body before it saw corruption, transported it to the abodes of bliss and glorified it. In this glorified state he and Elijah appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

His eye was not dim — He was able to see as far as human vision can reach when the Lord showed him the Land of Promise from the mountain peak.

Nor his natural force abated — Amid all the burdens and hardships which had come upon him he had retained the vigor of manhood — a special gift of God.

Wept for Moses thirty days — Thirty days or more was common for men of high rank (Joseph), while seven was the usual number. Israel had lost its deliverer from the Egyptian bondage and its great leader — a most extraordinary man.

Joshua . . . Israel hearkened unto him — He was universally accepted as the new God-given leader.

Arose not a prophet . . . like unto Moses — Not until the still greater Prophet came — Jesus Christ.

Face to face — God had revealed His will to Moses directly, without any mediating agency — angel, dream, or vision.

Catechism: First and Fourth Commandments; Close of Commandments; Qu. 140; Third Article ("resurrection of the body"); Seventh Petition.

Hymns: 78, 1 ("The Lord is God alone"); 528; 538; 559.

Bible Readings: Deut. 32 and 33; Pss. 78. 90.

37. Israel Enters Canaan. Josh 1-5

All those Israelites who were classed among the adults when Moses led them out of Egypt were dead now, and their bodies ("carcasses," Num. 14, 32) were moldering in the wilderness. Even Moses, the servant of the Lord, had not been allowed to enter the Holy Land. Joshua and Caleb were the only exceptions. Joshua had become Moses's successor, the new leader of the people. He was now about eighty-four years old.

Joshua Becomes Leader.

Joshua = "Jehovah is Salvation." It is the same name as Jesus, the latter of which is the Greek form of the Hebrew proper noun. Joshua is a type of our Savior. As Joshua brought Israel into the Land of Promise, the earthly Canaan, so Jesus is the Way to the Land of Promise that will never pass away (Luke 21, 33), the heavenly Canaan.

Strong and very courageous — A most necessary admonition in view of what Moses had experienced with the people in the wilderness.

Book of the Law — The Pentateuch, the five books of Moses. The Word of God was to be his sole guide.

Out of thy mouth — Let it be the subject of your conversation and teaching.

Meditate therein — "Search the Scriptures." John 5, 39. (Cat., Qu. 35.)

Prosperous . . . good success — It is God alone who can prosper the work of our hands. (Hymn 363, 1.)

Within three days — What joyful news for the people!

The Lord . . . giveth you — They must not forget that they had the Lord to thank for that great temporal blessing. (Cat., Qu. 245.)

Hearken unto thee — They kept their promise.

Spies Sent to Jericho.

Rahab — Of special interest not only because she furthered the cause of the people of God, but also because she became the ancestress of Christ, having, after the fall of

Jericho, been married to a man of the tribe of Judah, an ancestor of King David. — Lodging the Israelitish spies was an act of faith on her part. Heb. 11, 31. She turned from idol-worship and a wicked life to the worship of the true God. Having heard of the wonderful things God had done for Israel, she, by the grace of God, accepted Him as her Lord and Savior.

I wist not . . . they went out — She employed deception lest the plan of the leader of God's people, Joshua, be frustrated. (This was *not* telling a falsehood "with a deceitful heart." Cat., Qu. 65.)

Upon the roof — The roofs of Oriental houses are flat.

Swear unto me, etc. — So sure she was that the Lord would give Canaan to His people.

The men did so — On condition that she would not betray them. Josh. 2, 14.

By a cord — A strong rope.

Upon the town wall — Up against it.

Passing over Jordan.

Faint because of us — Fear possessed the hearts of the inhabitants of Jericho to such an extent that they were completely discouraged. The conviction had been growing upon them as Israel had come nearer to the Jordan Valley that Israel's God was stronger than their idols.

Ark of the Covenant — Containing the two tables of the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod, and a golden pot, in which three quarts of manna were preserved. The Ark now took the place of the pillar of cloud as a symbol of God's gracious presence. — The priests, carrying the Ark, were the first to step into the bed of the river. When they had reached the middle of the bed, they stood still, whereupon the people followed them, passing over to the western shore. The priests were the last to leave the river-bed. — The march across the Jordan took at least six hours, the procession being over four miles in length. — It was on the tenth day of Abib, or Nisan, forty years to a day since the selection of the first paschal lamb. — The miracle was all the greater since the

passage was made in April, when the stream was swollen from the heavy rains due at that time of the year.

The waters . . . stood and rose up — The same miracle which the Lord performed at the Red Sea. Joshua had told the people that the Lord would provide a miraculous passage through Jordan for them in just this manner. And the people believed the message. Those were days of a heroic faith. (Cat., Qu. 104 ["omnipotent"]. 107.)

The Salt Sea — The Dead Sea. (Map 3.)

Failed—Diminished until the bed of the river was dry.—

The Jordan near Jericho.

We can imagine what effect this miracle had on the inhabitants of Jericho and other Canaanites.

Against Jericho — Opposite to, over against. — The Lord had kept His promise; Israel had now entered the Land of Promise.

First month — Abib (April).

Gilgal — Probably about a mile or two southeast of Jericho, five miles west of Jordan.

Twelve stones — The Lord had commanded Joshua to select twelve men, one from each tribe of Israel, each one of whom was to pick up a stone as he crossed the bed of Jordan and carry it to his camp. — Now these twelve stones were

set up as a memorial, not only for the present generation and their children, but for years and centuries to come. Josh. 4. (Jacob's memorial: the altar at Bethel. Hymn 80.)

The manna ceased — The people could now "eat of the fruit of the land," and therefore the divine miracle ceased, being no longer necessary. (Cat., Qu. 247.)

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust in God"). First Article ("divine goodness and mercy").

Hymns: 61; 64; 73, 1. 2.

Bible Readings: Ps. 114; 106, 31—43.

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38. The Fall of Jericho. Josh 6-7

The Lord had promised the children of Israel through Moses that He would thrust out the enemy from before them when they would enter the Promised Land, all the heathen nations that inhabited Canaan, and they were utterly to destroy them. After crossing the Jordan and encamping in Gilgal, where they celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, forty years since it had been instituted in Egypt, they began their campaign by laying siege to Jericho.

Jericho Taken.

Jericho — Jericho, called the City of Palm-trees (Deut. 34, 3), was situated in the fertile Valley of the Jordan, about five miles west of the river, six or seven miles north of the Dead Sea. It was a town of considerable size, strongly fortified, very rich, and a royal residence. Its strong walls, gates, and towers offered no mean resistance to the Israelites, particularly since they were almost entirely devoid of arms, as well as of apparatus for conducting a siege. And still the city had to be taken, as it was the key to the whole country. (Maps 3 and 8.) — After it was destroyed by Joshua, a curse was pronounced by him upon any one who would rebuild it. This curse was fulfilled upon Hiel, 533

years later. 1 Kings 16, 34. At the time of Elijah a school of prophets flourished there, and Elisha miraculously healed its waters. Zedekiah and his men, fleeing from Jerusalem, were captured in the Plains of Jericho. Herod the Great embellished the city with palaces and made it his winter residence. Zacchaeus, in the days of Christ, was the chief revenue officer of the wealthy district of Jericho. It was at that time a great export center.

Into thine hand — Notwithstanding the seemingly insuperable obstacles, Joshua was to take that city. Mark well that God does not say, "I *will* give it into thine hand," but, "I *have* given," etc. This, again, required a strong faith on the part of Joshua and the people. And they fully trusted in the word of the Lord.

Men of war — All those able to bear arms and fight the enemy.

Go round about the city — They should march around the city, led by seven trumpeters. But they were to do so in perfect silence for six days. — A peculiar way of besieging a strong city! And, no doubt, the inhabitants of Jericho made them the butt of jokes and incessant mockery. However, Israel was to learn that not their prowess would destroy the enemy, but the omnipotent hand of God. (Cat., Qu. 15; Jer. 17, 15.)

Compass the city — Make a circuit of it.

Seven times — Truly, an act of great faith.

Trumpets — Made of rams' horns. They had a loud, piercing tone.

A great shout — A war-cry.

At the seventh time — Probably late in the afternoon.

Accursed . . . to the Lord — Devoted to God, for purposes of divine worship. The inhabitants were all to be killed on account of their great wickedness, and all destructible material was to be burned with fire, while all precious metals were to be put to religious use.

Only Rahab shall live — Joshua honored the oath which

his spies had given her. (Cat., Qu. 25: "welfare of our neighbor." Qu. 24; Matt. 5, 33: "shalt perform," etc.)

The wall fell down flat — Not, of course, as a result of the shouting and the blowing of trumpets, not by the hand of man, but as we read Heb. 11, 30: "By *faith* the walls of Jericho fell down," faith that believes the promise of the almighty God, who performed this miracle that His name might be declared throughout all the earth. Ex. 9, 16.

Achan's Theft.

Achan . . . took of the accursed thing — He had secretly appropriated some of the booty which he had found in Jericho to private use instead of giving it to the priests to be devoted to religious purposes, as the Lord had strictly commanded.

The anger of the Lord, etc. — The Lord could not let this flagrant trespass of His command go unpunished.

The men of Ai smote, etc. (Map 7.) — After the fall of Jericho, Joshua had sent about 3,000 men to Ai, a town of about 12,000 inhabitants, a little over two miles southeast of Bethel, to take it. But they met with ignominious defeat. This brought consternation to Israel; the people's heart "melted"; they were totally discouraged and upbraided Joshua for leading them into the Land of Canaan.

Joshua rent his clothes, etc. — Bowed down with grief over the defeat, he implored the Lord to tell him why He had refused to give success to their arms.

Before the Ark of the Lord — He appealed to the grace of God in the promised Messiah; for the lid of the Ark constituted the mercy-seat. Rom. 3, 25 ("propitiation" = mercy-seat); Heb. 9, 5. (Cat., Qu. 195: "for Christ's sake"; Eph. 1, 7.)

Put dust upon their heads — A mode of expressing great sorrow.

Wherefore liest thou thus, etc.? — I have not gone back on My promise; the people are to blame for the defeat sustained.

Sanctify the people — Outwardly they should employ the prescribed ceremonial purification, but above all they were to appear before the Lord with repenting and contrite hearts; for a great sin had been committed in their midst. (Cat., Qu. 319.)

Tribes . . . families . . . households — "Lots were to be cast, first upon the tribes, then upon the clans into which the guilty tribe was divided, then upon the houses of the fathers, the groups of families under one patriarchal ancestor, and finally upon the heads of the households included in the guilty house of the fathers." (*Pop. Com.*) This mode of making decisions by the sacred lot is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, *e. g.,* 1 Sam. 14, 2; Jonah 1, 7; Acts 1, 24—26. One way of doing this was to place white pebbles with one black one in a sack and let the proper persons each draw out one. The disposing of the lots on such occasions was in the hands of the Lord. Prov. 16, 33.

My son — Mark the relation of those who are governed (subjects) to the powers that be. (Table of Duties: "Of Subjects," Titus 3, 1: "be subject to . . . obey magistrates.")

Give glory to the Lord — By confessing his sin and admitting that God's judgment against him was just.

Babylonish garment — A long robe, beautifully dyed and richly embroidered with gold and silk, such as worn by kings on state occassions.

200 shekels of silver — About $130.

A wedge of gold — A wedge-shaped bar of gold = $485.

Saw . . . coveted . . . took . . . hid — "That is the progress of sin: seeing, coveting, taking, hiding, dissembling." (*Pop. Com.*)

Troubled us — By his theft Achan had brought trouble, *i. e.,* the wrath of God and consequent divine punishment, upon all Israel.

Stoned him — He was punished in the same way as the blasphemer in the wilderness because he had "violated the honor of God," notwithstanding the fact that he had openly confessed his sin. If he was truly penitent, his soul was

saved, though he died as a criminal. (The penitent malefactor on Calvary.)

Great heap of stones — A monument of shame and a warning to others.

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust in God"); Seventh Commandment, Qu. 59.

Hymns: 365, 2; 375, 3; 346, 5.

Bible Readings: Ps. 76; Luke 16, 1—7.

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39. Joshua's Victories and Last Days.

After the stoning of Achan, Israel attacked the town of Ai once more, and this time successfully. From now on the Book of Joshua records nothing but victories over the wicked Canaanites, whom the Lord had determined to exterminate. The Lord performed one more outstanding miracle to encourage His people to make the conquest of Canaan complete and to strike terror to the hearts of the enemy.

Sun and Moon Stand Still.

Gathered — Leagued themselves together, formed an alliance; quintuple alliance.

Gibeon — About six miles from Jerusalem, in a northwesterly direction, and eighteen miles from Joshua's camp at Gilgal. Josh. 10, 2 it is called "a great city, as one of the royal cities," the residence of a king or sheik. — This city was later given to the tribe of Benjamin and to the Levites. The Tabernacle was set up there in the days of David. (Map 8.)

Suddenly — Unawares; took them completely by surprise, before they were ready to give battle.

The Lord discomfited them — Bewildered, confused, perplexed them and completely put them to rout, perhaps by sending a terrific wind-storm where they were lying in camp. The wind-storm was followed by a hail-storm. The hailstones were of such a size as to kill a great number of men. — Emphasize "Lord."

"Sun, stand thou still" — Such was the heroic faith of Joshua that he firmly believed the Lord would perform such a miracle, check the course of sun and moon for "about a whole day" in order that Israel might completely destroy the mighty enemy, who wanted to halt them in their victorious warfare against the Canaanitish nations.

Valley of Ajalon — A broad and very beautiful valley near the town of the same name. (Map 8.) Ajalon was a village or a small town.

Gibeon.

No day like that — These words are added, 1) to point to the magnitude of the miracle, 2) to quench all doubts in our minds as to its really having happened.

Division of the Land.

All the land — The Lord fulfilled His promise to the letter.

For an inheritance — The children of Israel became the real possessors of that rich country in which their patriarch ancestors had been sojourners and pilgrims.

Divisions by . . . tribes — According to divine command (Josh. 14, 2) the land was divided by lot; "but the size of each tribal state was fixed according to the numerical strength of the individual tribe,"

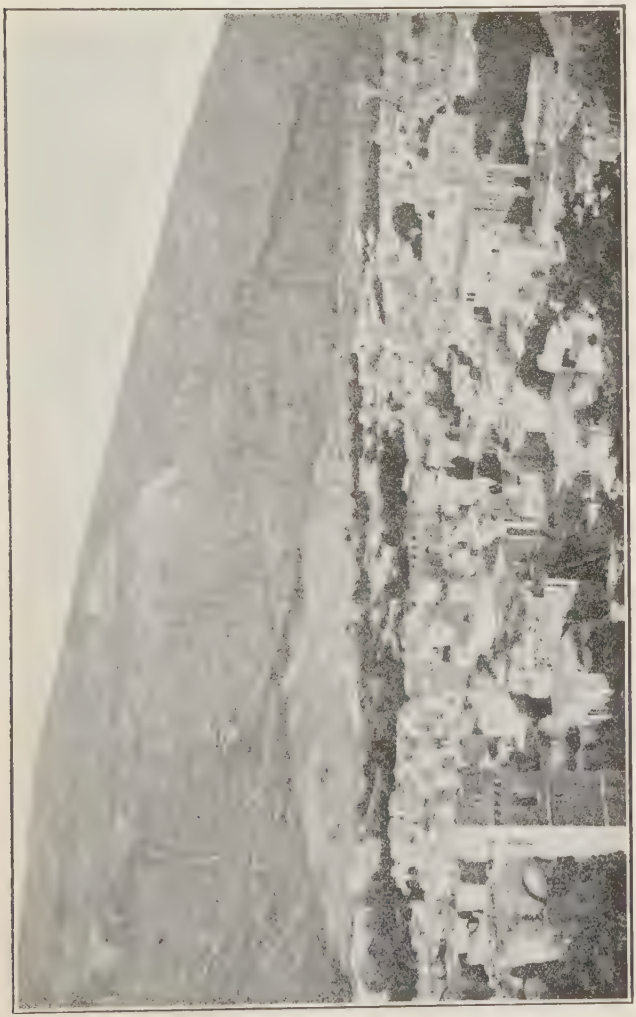
The tribe of Levi . . . not any inheritance — Because the men of the tribe of Levi were to minister to the Lord in His Sanctuary, the Lord did not want them to follow the ordinary pursuits of life and acquire and possess much property. He gave them forty-eight cities, four in each tribe, except that Judah and Simeon together furnished nine and Naphtali but three. Each of these cities had a tract of land around it for pasturage. This was their inalienable property. Besides, they were entitled to a tenth of the income of Israel. — (Table of Duties: "What the Hearers Owe to Their Pastors.") — "By living in the midst of all the tribes, the Levites were to be an example to the entire nation." (*Pop. Com.*)

Suburbs — The pasture- or meadow-lands surrounding each Levitical city, as prescribed Lev. 35, 4. 5.

Shiloh — Seventeen miles north of Jerusalem. The Tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant remained here until the death of Eli. (Map 7.)

Shechem — Thirty-four miles west of Jerusalem. "Its site is unrivaled for beauty in Palestine." Joseph's bones were buried there. Jacob had given Joseph "the parcel of field" which he had bought there from Hamon as "one portion above his brethren," as a special inheritance. Gen. 33, 18. 19; 35, 22. (Map 7.)

Shechem was situated in the valley between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal. According to divine command, Deut. 11, 29; 27, 1—13, the blessings and curses of God's Law were to be pronounced from these two mountains, the former from Mount Gerizim, the latter from Mount Ebal. After the victory gained over the king of Ai, Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal, and, after placing half of the tribes of Israel on this mountain and the other half on Mount Gerizim, "read all the words of the Law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law." Josh. 8, 30—35. — Mounts Ebal (3,076 feet above sea-level) and Gerizim (2,855 feet) are opposite each other, a mile and a half apart at their summits. "Numerous travelers have repeated the experiment of stationing persons on the opposite mountains and heard the reading of the Ten Commandments by each party, and they were also heard by each other with great distinctness."



Shechem and Mount Ebal.

Mount Gerizim and Shechem.

Joshua's Exhortation.

Rest from all their enemies — Israel had not been fully obedient to the command of the Lord with regard to waging war against all the Canaanites and exterminating them; on the contrary, as the Books of Joshua and Judges tell us, in various parts of the country not a few strong heathen tribes remained masters of certain territories, especially in mountain fastnesses. Nevertheless Israel had rest from its enemies because these scattered tribes did not, as long as Joshua lived, venture an attack against what they considered invaders.

Called for all Israel — He summoned an assembly of all the people, especially the elders, heads, judges, and officers (Josh. 24, 1), the heads of the tribes, as well as local rulers, judges, and magistrates. This mass convention was held at Shiloh, near Shechem, where the Ark of the Covenant had found a temporary resting-place, about thirty years after Israel's entrance into Canaan.

Stricken in age — The feebleness of old age was asserting itself.

Ye have seen, etc. — Admonition to be truly grateful for the extraordinary blessings received and to remain faithful to their divine Benefactor. (Later in text: "Not one thing hath failed," etc.)

Snares . . . traps . . . scourges — If they would become backsliders ("go back"), the "nations," the heathen tribes that had not yet been driven out, would become to them what snares and traps are to beasts of prey and scourges and lacerating whips, or lashes, to captives of war, slaves, and criminals.

Until ye perish — Unfaithfulness to their God and Savior, if persisted in, would be punished by expulsion from this their "inheritance," Canaan. (Babylonian Captivity 800 years later!)

So . . . all evil things, etc. — See Lev. 26, 14—33; Deut. 28, 15—68. The divine threats are not vain words; just as sure to be carried out as His promises to be fulfilled. (Close of Commandments.)

In sincerity and truth — Without hypocrisy. (Cat., Qu. 27; Matt. 15, 8; 7, 21.)

If it seem evil unto you, etc. — The Lord did not desire the outward worship and observance of His commandments if they did not believe that this would tend to their temporal and eternal welfare.

As for me and my house, etc. — A grand public confession and a mighty appeal to the people to remain steadfast in faith and life wholly devoted to God. — A beautiful motto for all children of God at all times! (First Article: "For all which it is my duty," etc.)

God forbid, etc. — By the grace of God Joshua's appeal was successful.

A covenant — A renewal of the covenant made at Sinai. Ex. 24, 7.

Statute . . . ordinance — Joshua repeated to the large assembly the various laws and commandments which the Lord had given to Moses.

The servant of the Lord — The same honorable designation given to Moses.

Died — At the same age reached by his ancestor Joseph (for Joshua was a member of the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph). 110 years

As to the six *cities of refuge* mentioned in a note to this lesson: One who had been found, after due investigation of the case, to have killed some one unintentionally was safe as long as he remained in that city or in the circuit of one thousand yards beyond its walls; otherwise he forfeited his life. After the death of the high priest during whose time of office the homicide was committed he was permitted to leave the city and live free and unmolested anywhere.

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust in God"); First Article.

Hymns: 365, 2; 373, 4; 394, 1; 292, 1—8. 16—18.

Bible Readings: Ps. 115, 1—3; 76; 77, 12—15; Is. 38, 5—8; Josh. 24.

Distribution of Canaan among the Tribes of Israel.

Canaanitish Nations.	Tribes of Israel.	Under Roman Dominion.
Sidonians	Asher (vicinity of Lebanon)	Upper Galilee
Unknown	Naphtali (Sea of Galilee)	
Perizzites	Zebulun (west of Sea of Galilee)	Lower Galilee
	Issachar (Esdrelon, Tabor)	
Hivites	Half tribe of Manasseh (Caesarea)	Samaria
	Ephraim (Schechem, Samaria)	
Jebusites, Amorites, Hittites, Philistines	Judah (Hebron), Simeon (Joppa), Dan	Judea
Ammonites, Bashan	Reuben (Heshbon), Gad (Decapolis), Half tribe of Manasseh (Gaulanitis, Batanaea)	Perea

The Inhabitants of Canaan.

After the lapse of about five hundred years since the days of the patriarchs, conditions had greatly changed in Canaan. Numerous cities had been built, and the country had been peopled by various heathen tribes, who frequently waged war with one another. And their methods of warfare had been greatly improved upon. Strongholds, or fastnesses, were to be found in various parts of the country, and the cities were surrounded by high walls and iron gates (Num. 13, 28; Deut. 3, 5; Josh. 10, 20), and they had great numbers of horses and iron chariots, so that, compared with them, Israel was at a great disadvantage, especially when battle was given in the plains. — But the Canaanitish nations had also made great strides in the peaceful pursuits of the times. The soil was being tilled everywhere, vineyards and olive-yards were cultivated, wells and cisterns had been dug for the herds of cattle, trade and commerce as well as the fine arts flourished, and the art of writing, then a very rare accomplishment, had been introduced some time before. — But mere outward civilization never contributes towards really improving the morals of a nation. Success and prosperity only tended to increase the desire of these nations to enjoy life and the good things the world

offers, and immorality was rampant; even unnatural vices were practised to a great extent. Their idol-worship, too, was of the voluptuous kind, intermingled with cruel practises. Superstition held them captive, and consequently they were strong believers in witchcraft and soothsaying. These nations were to be wiped off from the face of the earth on account of the abominations of which they were guilty, and Israel was to possess their land.

The Time of the Judges.

(Ca. 1440—1100 B. C.)

Israel now had everything that was necessary to build up a prosperous nation, and it was governed by good laws. It had a *land* in which milk and honey flowed; it had the true *religion*, the revelation not only of God's holy will, the Law, which sinful man, alas! cannot fulfil, but also of His good and gracious will, the Gospel of the promised Messiah, which promised salvation through faith in Him and also kindled and preserved this faith; it had a *constitution* given by God Himself (theocracy). Israel might have been a happy people, enjoying peace and prosperity, as well as all the temporal and spiritual blessings promised them by God. — When Joshua died, there were still some remnants of the original possessors of the country. God wanted to "prove Israel by them whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord which He commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses"; and "at the least such as before knew nothing thereof," *i. e.*, of warfare, should thus be taught how to defend themselves against their enemies. But when "another generation arose, which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which He had done for Israel," they "did evil in the sight of the Lord." Instead of exterminating the Canaanites, they "put them" (those that still remained) "to tribute." And thus they became "thorns in their sides," and their gods were "a snare unto them." Instead of keeping aloof from them, "they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods." When the Lord punished them, they would repent, whereupon God would send them a deliverer; but no sooner had this benefactor of his people departed this life than they would again do evil in the sight of the Lord.

40. Gideon. Judges 2-7

If the children of Israel had walked in the ways of the Lord, He would have showered all the blessings upon them which He had promised them, and no enemy would have molested, much less subjugated them. But they served God sincerely and faithfully only as long as those men lived who had been contemporaries of Joshua. When these had been gathered unto their fathers, the people began to worship the idols of the heathen round about them. The consequence was that the Lord punished them by permitting various heathen nations to vex them, despoil them of their harvest, and make them tributary to them. When, in their distress, they cried to the Lord, He would send them deliverers, called Judges, who freed them from the yoke of the oppressors. There were sixteen Judges in all. The period of the Judges, from the death of Joshua until Saul was anointed king, may be given as about 450 years.

The Judges.

Knew not the Lord — They had heard of the true God, the God of Israel, from their parents, but had not, like them, seen the great miracles the Lord had done for them, nor the long series of victories He had granted them. Doubt, unbelief, ingratitude, disregard of the Word of God, idolatry ("followed other gods"), service of sin ("did evil"), was rampant among them. (Cat.: "We should fear and love God that we may not," etc. Natural consequence: If we do not fear and love God, we "do evil," serve sin.)

The Lord . . . their enemies — This sad state of affairs did not merely "happen"; it was a divine punishment for their falling away from the Lord Jehovah. It was the *Lord*, too, who, in answer to their penitent prayers, sent them Judges, deliverers (Judg. 3, 9), also called saviors (Neh. 9, 27), because they "saved them out of the hand of their enemies."

Midianites — The Midianites, southeast of the Moabites (Map 2), descendants of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25, 2), had been almost exterminated by Israel after they had

seduced God's people to idolatry and fornication. Num. 25, 1—3; 31, 1—12. But they had meanwhile recovered from the decimation suffered many years ago and had become powerful enough to overrun Canaan and oppress Israel. "They came as grasshoppers for multitude"; "without number." They "destroyed the increase of the earth [the harvest] . . . and left no sustenance for Israel." Judg. 6, 4. 5.

The Angel of the Lord — The Son of God in the form of man. He came with a gracious promise of deliverance after the people had confessed their sins and prayed to the Lord for forgiveness and His merciful help. Judg. 6, 6—10. (Confession, repentance — divine mercy, help. Cat., Qu. 305; Acts 3, 19: "Repent . . . that your sins," etc.)

Gideon — Of the tribe of Manasseh, of the half tribe of that name which received its inheritance west of Jordan. (Map 3.)

Threshed wheat — Wheat was generally threshed on hill-tops, where the wind could blow away the chaff while the grains fell to the ground. — The threshing-floor, as a rule, was a smooth place near the village, under the open sky. Here the grain was heaped about a foot deep, and the threshing was begun. In many cases a heavy sledge of wood, having sharp stones or iron points underneath, was dragged back and forth over the heap. As the heavy sledge was drawn over the straw and ears, the grain was rubbed out, which sifted through the straw. Or the grain was trodden out by the feet of oxen. See Deut. 25, 4; 28, 27. 28; 41, 15. 16 ("sharp threshing-instrument"); 1 Cor. 9, 9. The chaff was collected and burned. Matt. 3, 12.

Wine-press — A square or oblong box excavated in the sloping surface rock, which afforded some concealment. — The grapes were trodden in a shallow upper vat, and the juice was drawn off by a hole at the bottom into a lower vat. Such rock presses are still used in some parts of Syria.

The Lord is with thee — As much as: The Lord is gracious unto thee.

Mighty man of valor — A man of great physical strength

and indomitable courage. At the same time he was humble. Judg. 6, 15.

I will put a fleece of wool, etc. — He desired to receive a visible sign from the Lord which would assure him that He really wanted to perform such great deeds through him, "the least" in his father's house. Judg. 6, 15. And the Lord gladly condescended to give him the sign he had requested.

Gideon Defeats the Midianites.

All the people with him — Having been called by God to deliver Israel from the hand of the Midianites, Gideon sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali (Map 3), summoning the men of these tribes to give battle to the invaders. 32,000 men followed his call to arms.

Too many . . . vaunt themselves — They would not give all glory to God, but would glory in their might. Jer. 9, 23. (Cat., Qu. 15: "trust in creatures," themselves. Jer. 17, 5: "trusteth in man.")

Whosoever is afraid — The Midianites had four times as many men and were wild and warlike hordes, while Gideon's small army was unorganized and untrained. It required faith not to be afraid of attacking such a powerful enemy.

Every one that lappeth, etc. — Every one who, instead of kneeling down to drink and fixing his eyes upon the stream, heedless of everything except the slaking of his thirst, would merely stoop and dip the water from the stream with his hand formed into a hollow spoon, at the same time, like a dog, continually turning his eyes watchfully hither and thither, always alert to a possible surprise attack by the enemy, — every such a one should remain with Gideon. Only three hundred stood this test. Through that — humanly speaking — ridiculously small band God Almighty wanted to "save" Israel.

Amalekites — (Map 3.) Defeated by Joshua; see Lesson 29. They had now allied themselves with the Midianites. Blotted out from the face of the earth by King Saul.

A man . . . told a dream — That dream was from the Lord,

and He gave it into the heart of the listener to interpret it in such a manner as to frighten and dishearten the Midianites; for the dream and its interpretation rapidly made the rounds throughout their army. (Note: The *Lord* paved the way for the victory of Israel.)

Cake of barley-bread — The Israelites were dubbed "barley-bread eaters" by the Midianites. Barley-bread was eaten by the poorer class of people. The Midianites, the despoilers and lords of Israel, ate wheat-bread.

Gideon worshiped — He thanked God for having granted him such encouragement.

Three companies — So that the enemy could be attacked on three sides.

Empty pitchers — Jars of earthenware in which the "lamps," torches, were concealed. While within the jars, the torches burned without a flame (such torches, a traveler says, are used by the police of Cairo, North Africa, to this day), but when waved in the air, they burst into a blaze.

Newly set watch — The sentinels who had watched the first part of the night had just been replaced by new ones.

As I do, so shall ye do — No commands would be given in order not to arouse the sleeping Midianites until all the three hundred men, extended in a long line around the enemy's camp, following Joshua's example, had broken their pitchers, fanned their torches, which they held in their left hands, into a burning flame, and taken the trumpets into their right hands. Then Gideon would blow his trumpet, whereupon a terrific blast of trumpets would be heard from the three hundred men.

The sword of the Lord and of Gideon! — They hoped to defeat the enemy trusting in the "sword," the almighty arm, of Jehovah.

Ran . . . cried . . . fled — "Imagine the midnight hour, the whole army wrapt in slumber, suddenly awakened by a terrific, deafening shout from every quarter at once, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!' with an equally startling and alarming blast of trumpets from three hundred trum-

peters; and at the same moment three hundred torches suddenly, instantaneously, glaring in the intense darkness!"

Against his fellow — Every fleeing soldier imagined every other man one of the assaulting host.

Subdued — Conquered, crushed, "so that they lifted up their heads no more" against Israel. Judg. 8, 28.

Rule thou over us — Be our king.

The Lord shall rule over you — If the people would walk in the ways of the Lord, they would need no visible lord, ruler, prince, or king. — A very fine answer!

Catechism: Fifth Petition ("not look upon our sins . . . nothing but punishment"); First Commandment ("trust in God").

Hymns: 515, 1—7; 136, 9; 273, 2.

Bible Readings: Ps. 46; 76; 91; 106, 34—46.

Annotational Matter.

The time of the Judges comprises a period of about 450 years. Acts 13, 20. The following is a list of Judges together with the probable terms of their service: —

	Years
Othniel, about 1400 B. C.	40
Under Eglon	18
Ehud, etc.	80
Under the Philistines	?
Shamgar	?
Under Jabin	20
Deborah and Barak	40
Under Midian	7
Gideon	40
Abimelech	3
Tola	23
Jair	18
Under the Ammonites	18
Jephthah	6
Ibzan	7
Elon	10
Abdon	8
Under the Philistines	40

Samson	20
Eli	40
Under the Philistines	20
Samuel	12

(Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

41. Samson.

(Part I.) Judges 13-15

Gideon delivered the northern tribes from the hands of their enemies, the Midianites. Samson lived in Southern Canaan, in Judea, and he was called by God to break the power of the Philistines, who terrorized that part of the country.

Samson's Birth.

Philistines—Already in the history of Abraham we heard of the Philistines. Probably coming from Egypt, they settled on a narrow strip of Western Canaan, from the shores of the Mediterranean to the hills of Judah. (Maps 3 and 8.) When Israel emigrated from Egypt, they were quite a powerful nation, for which reason the Lord did not want Israel to pass through their country, "lest peradventure the people repent when they see war," etc. Ex. 13, 17. The Philistines had a strong military organization and showed an aggressive and warlike spirit. Their commerce was widely extended. They overran the southwestern part of Canaan, carried off the harvest, took men, women, and children prisoners, and made them their slaves. They had so completely subdued the Israelites of Southwestern Canaan that they allowed no worker in iron ("smith") among them, but compelled them to bring their agricultural implements to them. 1 Sam. 13, 19—21.

Danites—The inheritance of Dan was north of that of Judah. (Map 3.) The land of both of these tribes, according to the allotment, extended to the Mediterranean; but neither Dan nor Judah had subdued the Philistines.

Manoah—He lived fourteen miles west of Jerusalem, in Zorah. (Map 8.)

Angel of the Lord — The Son of God.

Nazarite — A Nazarite (Num. 6, 2—21) was a male or female who had made a peculiar vow to God. A Nazarite was obliged to abstain totally from wine and all intoxicating liquors, to keep his head shorn (shaved), and to avoid all contamination with dead bodies. When the time for which he had consecrated himself expired, he brought a special offering to the Lord, and the priest cut off his hair and burned it, after which he was released from his vow. — Samson and John the Baptist were perpetual Nazarites (Samson: "from the womb to the day of his death," Judg. 13, 7).

Deliver Israel, etc. — Samson had a direct divine call to harm the Philistines as much as he could.

The Lord blessed him — Both physically and spiritually. From Manoah's prayer to the Lord (Judg. 13, 8) we justly conclude that he and his wife were particularly concerned about the proper bringing up of their son in the fear of the Lord. Samson received an excellent religious education at home.

Samson's Riddle.

Timnath — About four miles southwest of Samson's birthplace. (Map 8.)

Of the daughters of the Philistines — God had forbidden the children of Israel to marry into heathen families (mixed marriages), lest they forsake Him and worship idols (danger of apostasy). But in this case God Himself wanted Samson to take a wife from Judah's heathen neighbors that he might have "an occasion against the Philistines," get an opportunity to harm them. Judg. 14, 4.

A young lion — The lions in Palestine were "smaller, more compact, and less formidable than the African lion." They were mostly found in the jungles of the Jordan. Not only did they attack the flocks, but they also devoured men and ravaged villages. They were captured in pitfalls. 2 Sam. 23, 20; Ezek. 19, 4. 8. The tribe of Judah bore the lion on its banner (as a symbol of royal power and strength), and Rev. 5, 5 Christ, the almighty Redeemer, is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah."

The Spirit of the Lord came upon him — He filled him with courage to make use of his giant strength.

Bees and honey in the carcass — In that hot country a carcass is speedily dried up by the sun's heat, and putrefaction is thus arrested. Probably in the hollow of the ribs of the carcass, bees had settled.

Feast . . . seven days — The wedding festivities generally lasted a whole week.

Riddle — The Orientals were fond of such exercises of wit and ingenuity.

Sheets . . . change of garments — "Sheets" were the thin garments worn next to the body; "garments," dresses, or robes, worn on festival occasions.

Declare it — Solve the riddle.

Eater — Devourer — the lion.

Meat . . . sweetness — Sweetmeat.

Entice thy husband — She was to tease him so long until he would disclose the secret to her.

Wept before him — Considering the dreadful fate that would befall her if she would not be able to solve the riddle for the Philistines.

Plowed with my heifer — If you had not had some one else, my wife, to tell you the solution, you never would have solved my riddle.

Ashkelon — One of the five well-known cities of the Philistines; a seaport town ten miles north of Gaza. (Map 8.) A temple of the goddess Astarte (Ashtoreth) had been built there.

Took their spoil — The garments of the Philistines he had slain.

REVENGE.

I gave her to thy companion — This great wrong gave Samson another occasion to inflict some injury upon the enemies of his people.

Three hundred foxes — Probably Samson did not turn the 150 pairs of foxes — or jackals — loose at once, but at different times and at different places in order to do the greatest possible injury to the standing crops. As no rain

fell at the time of the harvest, the grain was easily set afire. The brands were attached at some distance from the tails. The terrified animals would rush as fast as possible from their captor and carry the devastation far and wide before the brand was extinguished.

Standing corn — Wheat.

Pitched — Encamped, ready for a war of revenge.

Bound Samson — What base ingratitude!

Shouted against him — Believing they would now be able to rid themselves of this dangerous enemy.

The cords . . . as flax . . . burned with fire — An apt illustration showing the extraordinary strength of Samson. — Note, however, as in various preceding lessons, that all glory is given to God for all the great feats or deeds accomplished by either a body of men or individuals; for we read: *"The Spirit of the Lord* came upon him, and," etc.

New jawbone — A jawbone of an ass that had just died, "whose bones still had great elasticity."

Catechism: Table of Duties, "Of Civil Government": "He is the minister of God, a revenger," etc. First Article (*"God . . . has given me my body,"* etc.).

Hymns: 352 (consecration — Nazarite); 78; 393.

Bible Readings: Ps. 79; 44, 1—9.

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42. Samson.

(Part II.)

Judges 16

If Samson, who was a votary of God, "a Nazarite unto God from his mother's womb" (Judg. 13, 7; 16, 17), had consecrated his whole life to the Lord, he would have accomplished much more as a deliverer of his people from the power and tyranny of the Philistines. But he listened to the luring voice of Satan and began to serve sin. The result was that God withdrew His blessing; instead, Samson had to feel His punishing hand. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10, 12.

Samson Betrayed.

Gaza — The chief of the five Philistine cities, 50 miles southwest of Jerusalem. (Map 8.) One of the oldest cities of the world. It is mentioned for the first time in the genealogy of the descendants of Ham. Gen. 10, 19. At the distribution of Canaan by Joshua it was assigned to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15, 47) and was captured by men of that tribe (Judg. 1, 18), but it reverted to the Philistines (Judg. 6, 4).

Gaza.

Took the doors of the gate, etc. — The gates of walled cities were constructed of wood, iron, or brass. As Gaza was the chief city of the warlike Philistines, it may be safely assumed that its gate was built of iron or brass. All the more astounding is Samson's feat. However, in performing it, he relied upon his own strength (we are not told this time that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him"; see last lesson); for he had meanwhile departed from the ways of the Lord.

Delilah — A wicked woman, who proved false to him. Samson shamefully broke the Nazarite vow of complete consecration to the Holy One of Israel.

The lords of the Philistines — The five princes of the nation.

Entice him — Persuade him by trickery, by coaxing and flattering him, wherein, etc.

Eleven hundred pieces of silver — In all, 5,500 pieces (bars) of silver, probably several hundred thousand dollars in our money.

Tell me, etc. — She was ready to betray him for money.

If they bind me, etc. — Samson did not divulge the secret the first three times, but he dallied with sin.

Green withs [withes] — A rope made of flexible, slender twigs, as of a willow.

With the web — If she would weave his long locks into the web of her loom as woof.

She fastened it with a pin — She fastened it to her loom with a cleat.

His soul was vexed — He felt extremely annoyed; "bothered to death."

Told her all his heart — Gave away his secret about his being a Nazarite, etc. In doing so, Samson sinned 1) against God, by wantonly forfeiting the extraordinary temporal gift He had given him for a special purpose (First Commandment: ingratitude); 2) against his own person, because he harmed himself in his own body; 3) against his brethren in the faith, because he deprived himself of the opportunity of helping and befriending them. (Fifth Commandment.)

Afflict him — She found that she had him in her power. God's punishment had come swiftly.

Took him — Made him their prisoner.

Fetters of brass — The strongest chains that were made. They had a lurking suspicion that Samson's strength might return just as suddenly as he had lost it.

Grind in the prison-house — Made him do the work of a slave, turning the millstones and grinding flour for them. — A mill in those days consisted of two round stones, each about two feet in diameter and six inches high. "The under,

or nether, millstone (Job 41, 24) was immovable and somewhat lower around the edge than in the center, slightly convex on the top. The upper one was concave at the bottom, or thicker at the circumference, so as to fit pretty closely to the other. In the center there was a hole and above this a funnel, or hopper, into which the grain was poured, and thus it ran in between the stones and was broken by them into meal, which fell over the edge upon a board. On the top of the other stone there was an upright peg, by means of which it was turned around." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) The millstones which Samson was compelled to turn must have been much larger than those used in common households.

Samson's End.

Dagon — The national god of the Philistines, a so-called fish-god, represented as having the face and hands of a man and the body of a fish. He was believed to have emerged from the sea and to have been "one of the great benefactors of men." — The Philistines offered a "great sacrifice," a thank-offering, to their idol for having, as they thought, delivered Samson into their hands. Their sacrifice was a blasphemy. (Second Commandment: praying to, and praising, idols.)

Samson . . . made them sport — The feasting and carousing idol-worshipers compelled their blind prisoner to entertain them with music. A harp with either eight or ten strings was wont to be played on such occasions.

Upon the roof — The large roof of the temple was flat like the roofs of the dwellings. — The Roman statesman Pliny tells of two Roman theaters whose roofs were so spacious that he believed the entire population of Rome might have been placed on them; and each of them rested on a large pivot.

Three thousand . . . beheld — Gazing down upon their unwilling, deeply humiliated entertainer with fiendish glee, they made him the target of rude jests and sarcastic flings.

Took hold of the two middle pillars — In this hour of deepest humiliation he repentingly cried to the Lord and,

bethinking himself of his divine calling to be a deliverer of his people, implored the Lord to grant him strength to avenge them upon their enemies.

The house fell upon the lords, etc. — The five ruling princes were killed in addition to the multitude of people. Samson's last deed, an act of faith (see Heb. 11, 32), was the greatest of all.

His death — Not to be adjudged an act of suicide, but to be compared with the act of a heroic leader in battle, who, to encourage his men and to rout the enemy, plunges into the thick of the fight and thus becomes an easy target for the enemy. This very thing was Samson's lifelong mission, to harm the Philistines wherever he could and to deliver his people from their power and tyranny. In this respect he has always been regarded as a type of Christ, the Deliverer of His people, all mankind, from the power and dominion of the hellish tyrant. — Samson died in the faith.

Catechism: Third and Sixth Petitions: Cat., Qu. 240; 1 John 2, 15—17; Qu. 258.

Hymns: 347; 381; 415, 5.

Bible Readings: Eph. 5, 1—12. 15—21; 2 Pet. 1, 5—11.

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43. Ruth. Ruth 1-4

The writer of the Book of Ruth says of the time of the Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." It was a time of sad defection from the God of Israel, of idol-worship, and of open disregard of God's holy Law. And yet the Lord had His own here and there. We even hear of a member of a heathen nation, a young woman, who forsook her people and their idols and professed faith in the true God and the promised Messiah; and what is more, this very young woman became an ancestress of our Lord Jesus.

Ruth's Faithfulness to Naomi.

When the Judges ruled — Most likely in the latter part of the era of the Judges, probably about sixty years before the birth of David.

A famine — God had threatened, by the mouth of Moses, to send famine, etc., as a punishment for the sin of backsliding, which was very prevalent in those days. Deut. 28, 15 ff.

Bethlehem — Five or six miles south of Jerusalem. (Map 8.) Rachel was buried there. Bethlehem means

Bethlehem.

"House of Bread"; and, true to its name, the region round about Bethlehem was very fertile. Lack of rain now made it barren. The famine seems to have lasted several years.

Elimelech = "My God is King."

Naomi = "The Winsome," or "Jehovah is pleased." Both were of the tribe of Judah.

Went into . . . Moab — On account of the protracted drought. A journey of about 75 miles. Moab was east of the Dead Sea. (Map 3.) That country was admirably adapted for pasture, and Elimelech very likely had a large flock of sheep. — The Moabites were descendants of Lot,

Abraham's nephew. They were heathen. They spoke a Hebrew dialect.

His sons took them wives . . . Moab — God had forbidden the Israelites to "make marriages" with the heathen. Deut. 7, 4. 5 (danger of apostasy).

Orpah = "Fawn," or "doe."

Ruth = "Friend."

The sons both died — Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth — all three widows; their earthly supporters and protectors gone!

Naomi . . . might return — Her misfortune was in reality her good fortune; she left the heathen country to return to God's people. — She had learned (Ruth 1, 6) that the famine in her old home was over.

The Lord deal kindly, etc. — She parted from her daughters-in-law with a blessing. — In the Old Testament much stress is laid upon the blessing of parents as being a very great boon for their children.

Dealt with . . . me — Orpah and Ruth had shown their mother-in-law love and esteem. (Fourth Commandment.)

Orpah . . . returned — She preferred the idolatry of the Moabites to the worship of the true God, of whom Naomi, no doubt, had told her.

Ruth clave unto her — She would not part from Naomi.

Whither thou goest, etc. — Though urged by her mother-in-law to stay with her people, she insisted on going with her to her *country* ("whither thou goest"), to her *home* ("where thou lodgest"), to her *people*, the chosen people of God ("thy people . . . my people"), for the purpose of worshiping the living *God* ("thy God my God") and being "gathered with the people of God" in *death* ("where thou diest . . . be buried"). A beautiful confession of faith! Ruth, the former heathen, now, by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, a child of God. (Cat., Qu. 174—178.)

Ruth the Gleaner.

All the city was moved — It created quite a stir of excitement in the little town.

Call me Mara — Mara means bitter. The bitterness of

affliction had come over her, she felt, because she had left the Promised Land with its worship of the true God for a heathen country (Ruth 1, 21: "The Lord hath testified against me"). She had left Bethlehem "full," a happy wife and mother and blessed with temporal goods; she returned "empty," a widow, poor, with a poor daughter-in-law to care for.

Barley-harvest — In April, about three weeks before wheat was harvested. The poorer class ate barley-bread.

Ruth . . . gleaned ears — The Lord had commanded the children of Israel (Lev. 19, 9. 10) to allow the poor to gather the gleanings (leavings) of the field at harvest-time and whatever grew in the corners of their fields. Ruth was not too proud to glean the harvest-field for a living. (Seventh Commandment. Cat., Qu. 59; 2 Thess. 3, 10.)

Boaz = "Lovely." A very wealthy man (Ruth 2, 1) of the tribe of Judah; a God-fearing man (the greeting he gave his reapers: "The Lord be with you!"); loved and esteemed by his laborers (their answer: "The Lord bless thee"). See Ps. 129, 8.

Go not to glean in another field — Having heard that Ruth was so good and kind to her mother-in-law, he permitted her a) to glean exclusively in his field, b) to work side by side with his maidens, c) to drink out of the vessel provided for the reapers, d) and to partake of the meal spread for the reapers; and he told his reapers e) to let her glean even among the sheaves, f) to let fall also some of the handfuls on purpose for her, and, in general, g) to treat her kindly ("rebuke her not").

Found grace — Unmerited favor and kindness.

Seeing I am a stranger? — She was astounded at such extraordinary kindness shown a member of a heathen nation. (God had commanded the children of Israel to show love and kindness to strangers. Lev. 19, 34; Ex. 22, 21. — Cat., Qu. 37. 48; Is. 58, 7: "hungry . . . cast out . . . naked.")

A full reward be given thee — The Lord would bless her richly for obeying His Fourth Commandment ("that it may be well with thee," etc.).

Ruth the Ancestress of David.

She gleaned . . . until evening — Under such favorable circumstances she had been able to glean almost a bushel of barley (an ephah, Ruth 2, 17). She had beaten the grain out herself with a flail.

One of our next kinsmen — "One of those who had the right to redeem the land belonging to Elimelech by marrying the widow of his son." (*Pop. Com.*)

Boaz winnoweth barley — In winnowing grain, it was taken on a shovel and thrown up in the wind, and the lighter chaff and straw were separated, sometimes by the help of a fan. The winnowing was generally done in the evening ("to-night"), when in Palestine the sea-breeze generally blows.

Threshing-floor — "The ancient threshing-places were selected in the highest summits, open on every side to the wind. Though called 'floors,' they were nothing but flats of ground from fifty to a hundred feet in diameter, annually leveled and rolled, so as to be as hard as a floor. . . . It was customary for the owner to sleep near by to protect the grain from thieves." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

Get thee down to the floor — "Naomi's former hopeless sorrow had given way to the joyful hope that Boaz, as a near relative, having taken an obvious interest in Ruth, would be willing to take upon himself the duty of redeeming her property, which she had been obliged to sell, and at the same time, as the levir in the case" (a levir was the brother of a deceased husband who had died without leaving a male child, or one who assumed the duties of such a brother), "to enter into marriage with Ruth, Deut. 25, 5. For it was a custom in Israel that, if the dead husband had no brothers to undertake this duty, the nearest male relative would do so, thus keeping the inheritance in the family through the children of such a union. It was the woman's right to ask this duty of the relative concerned." (*Pop. Com.*) This is what Ruth did, upon the advice of her mother-in-law, by saying to Boaz, "Spread thy skirt over thine handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman."

If he will not do the part, etc. — If he would not be willing to take her in marriage, then he, Boaz, would do so.

How the matter will fall — What the outcome would be.

Boaz . . . took Ruth — The Lord graciously rewarded the filial love Ruth had shown her mother-in-law by giving her a God-fearing husband and a large measure of temporal blessings. (See promise of Fourth Commandment.)

The Lord gave her a son — Ruth, the former heathen, became the great-grandmother of David and, consequently, an ancestress of our Lord and Savior. — In this way God plainly indicated to the people of Israel in the Old Testament that the Messiah was to be the Savior also of the Gentiles. (Cat., Qu. 158.)

Catechism: Fourth Commandment. Cat., Qu. 40. 43. 44.

Hymns: 507, 1. 2; 468; 88; 498; 151, 2.

Bible Readings: Ps. 128; Jer. 35, 18. 19; Matt. 19, 27—30.

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44. Samuel. 1 Sam. 1—7

Samuel was the last of the Judges of Israel. He commenced a work of reformation, something that had not been attempted by any of the Judges that had preceded him. Idolatry was banished, the worship of the true God was restored, and he made annual circuits of the country to administer justice.

Hannah.

Elkanah = "God possesses."

Hannah = "Grace"; same as Anna.

No children — It was considered a disgrace among the Israelitish women to be childless; cf. Sarah and Elisabeth.

House of the Lord — The Tabernacle (containing the Ark of the Covenant, the altar of incense, the table of showbread, and the golden candlestick) was at Shiloh, about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, since the days of Joshua. (Map 7.)

Temple — The Tabernacle.

Bitterness of soul — She was in deep distress of mind, continually sad.

Prayed unto the Lord — In the court of the Tabernacle.

Wept sore — Cried excessively.

Lord of hosts — The first time this phrase occurs in the Bible. "Hosts" = angels.

Handmaid — Mary, the mother of our Lord, used the same expression. It showed true humility.

I will give, etc. — Not a rash vow, but one that she intended to keep.

Ruins of Shiloh.

Unto the Lord — To serve the Lord in the Tabernacle. — Samuel, like Samson, was "a Nazarite unto God from the womb" — dedicated to the service of God before his birth.

Spake in her heart — God hears the desire of the heart. (Cat., Qu. 208; Ps. 10, 17.)

Poured out my soul — "Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our Refuge, — Take it to the Lord in prayer." That is what Hannah did.

The God of Israel grant thee thy petition — Eli was convinced that such a prayer would be heard, and he could

not but tell the sad woman so. — Hearing such words of reassurance from the high priest, Hannah, no doubt, was greatly comforted.

Hannah's Prayer Heard.

Remembered — God heard her prayer.

Samuel = "Heard of God; asked for of God." — Hannah's song of praise on this occasion (1 Sam. 2, 1—10) is a magnificent hymn and has been compared with the song of Mary (Luke 1, 46—55). (Cat., Qu. 28.)

Weaned — As a daily portion was not allotted to Levite children until they reached the age of three years (2 Chron. 31, 16), it has been inferred that among the Jews children continued to suckle up to that time. The weaning was celebrated by a feast, as may be seen from Gen. 21, 8. (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*) — Samuel, probably, was now about five or six years old. Weaning may here be taken in a wider sense.

Minister unto the Lord — Assisted Eli in his priestly functions. (Samuel's father was a Levite.) He had to light the lamps in the Tabernacle, open the doors, and run errands. He was also the personal attendant of the aged and dim-sighted Eli. — He was "girded with a linen ephod" (1 Sam. 2, 18), which was a short skirt girt about the waist. Every year his mother brought him a little coat (v. 19).

Eli's Sons.

Sons of Belial — This expression "is applied by the sacred writers to such lewd, profligate, and vile persons as seem to regard neither God nor man. (Deut. 13, 13; Judg. 19, 22; 1 Sam. 2, 12.)" — *Luther "boese Buben."* — They gave great offense to Israel with the scandalous lives they led. (Cat., Qu. 227: "he that . . . lives otherwise profanes," etc. Qu. 229; Ezek. 22, 26; Rom. 2, 23. 24.

No good report — Very bad rumors are afloat about you. — Mark how lenient in the face of such fearful wickedness! A holy wrath would have been in place here. (Table of Duties: "To Parents.")

Hearkened not — Listened not. They only laughed at the weak reprimands given them by their father.

In favor, etc. — He was a God-fearing lad and therefore was in favor with God; and fearing God, he naturally carried himself so that he was liked and esteemed by every one.

Man of God — Prophet.

Kick at My sacrifice — They trod the Lord's Word and His sacrifices under foot by their shameless living.

Honorest thy sons above Me — By allowing them to dishonor God as they did.

They that despise Me — As a result of Eli's neglecting the duties of fatherhood over against his sons, "God's name was blasphemed." Rom. 2, 23. — When Solomon "thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord," the word of the Lord was fulfilled "which He spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." 1 Kings 2, 27. Eli's family was from that time on deprived of the honor of high-priesthood.

Thy two sons, etc. — They shall meet with a violent death, and both on the same day.

God's Message.

Was laid down — In the court of the Tabernacle, where cells had been built for the priests and Levites while they were serving their courses. Eli, very likely, slept near him.

The third time — Though roused from his sleep three times, Samuel did not grumble, but willingly sprang to his feet each time and asked the aged high priest what he wished him to do for him. A model of obedience! (Fourth Commandment.)

I will perform, etc. — All the words which My prophet spoke to Eli concerning his house will come true.

Made themselves vile — Everybody was utterly disgusted with them, detested them, because of their profligate behavior.

Restrained them not — He did not earnestly check or curb them in their wicked career. — Parents must reprove

and punish the sins of their children with severity and rigor, if need be.

Vision — A revelation of God given during the night in ordinary sleep. — It required no little bravery for young Samuel to tell the aged high priest, his superior, the most respected man of the entire nation, what God had revealed to him.

Every whit — He did not withhold one word of the Lord from him.

What seemeth Him good — I humble myself under the chastening hand of God. — These words sound well enough, but since no change of action on the part of Eli is recorded, it must be feared that this was an expression of impotent resignation rather than penitent and faithful submission to the will of God.

God's Threats Carried Out.

Ark of the Covenant — They had taken it with them without a word of the Lord to that effect. Israel cherished the superstitious belief that the Lord would be on their side in the battle against the heathen Philistines if they would but take the Ark of the Covenant with them. The Ark was treated as a charm that would insure victory — a sin against the Second Commandment. (Cat., Qu. 26.)

Smitten — Put to rout, vanquished. 30,000 Israelites fell in battle.

Ark of God is taken — "The Philistines took it to Ashdod, and placed it by the side of their idol Dagon. 1 Sam. 5. But by severe judgment, God avenged His insulted majesty, and they were compelled to return it to the people of Israel, by whom it was lodged at Kirjath-jearim. 1 Sam. 6 and 7. When David had fixed his residence at Jerusalem, the Ark was removed thither with sacred ceremonies and kept there until the Temple was prepared to receive it. Solomon put it in the Temple." (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

His neck brake — He was killed instantly by the fall. "It was the beginning of the divine judgment upon Eli and his family, although he himself seems to have died in the fear of God." (*Pop. Com.*)

Samuel as Judge.

And the Lord visited the Philistines, etc. — After their victory over the Israelites the Philistines (regarding this heathen nation see p. 100 ff.) carried the Ark of the Covenant, which they had captured, in jubilant triumph to Ashdod, one of the five confederated cities of their nation, north of Gaza (Map 3), the chief seat of their fish-god Dagon. (In the New Testament Ashdod is called Azotus; see Acts 8, 40.) They set the Sanctuary of God near the statue of Dagon, ascribing their victory to their idol, who had proved himself mightier than the God of the Israelites! Not only, however, did the Lord cause the dumb and powerless idol to fall to the floor of the heathen temple twice, mutilating it, but He smote the Philistines with boils and ulcers, "a deadly destruction," which caused such a consternation that the Ark of the Covenant was returned to the children of Israel. (Cat., Qu. 22; Gal. 6, 7.)

Kirjath-jearim — One of the four cities of the Gibeonites, situated on the border of Judah and Benjamin, but belonging to Judah. Here the Ark remained until it was brought to Jerusalem by David. (Map 8.)

Put away the strange gods — Samuel, the last and by far the best of all the Judges Israel had, and, in addition a prophet, preached repentance to the people because they were largely worshiping idols and consequently had forsaken the Lord.

Served the Lord only — The people obeyed the call to repentance.

Mizpeh (or Mizpah) = "Watch-tower." There were several towns by that name in Canaan. This Mizpeh was situated on the southwestern border of Benjamin, three miles north of Jerusalem. The mountain there is the highest in the vicinity of Jerusalem. From its summit a very extensive view of the surrounding country is obtained. From all tribes the people gathered here for humiliation and prayer.

The Lord thundered with a great thunder — The Philis-

times had come up with a large army, hoping to administer another crushing defeat to Israel. But the Lord, in answer to Samuel's prayer for the people, sent such a terrific thunderstorm that they fled in dismay, and the Israelites so overwhelmingly defeated them that they did not dare to attack Israel again as long as Samuel lived. — "Coast" = boundary.

Samuel took a stone, etc. — Set up a plain monument, a memorial, which was to remind this and coming generations of the wonderful deliverance which the Lord had granted them.

Ebenezer = "Stone of help." (Second Commandment: "praise and give thanks" after our prayer for help has been heard. Cat., Qu. 28.)

Catechism: Fourth Commandment, Qu. 42. — Second Commandment.

Hymns: 381, 8; 346, 2. 3; 544, 1. 2; 80.

Bible Readings: Prov. 4, 10—27; Eccl. 11, 9. 10; Ps. 99, 6—9; Is. 48, 17—22; Ps. 106, 34—48.

The First Three Kings.

(1095—975 B. C.)

A new era for Israel began with Samuel. Outwardly it was an era of prosperity and extension of power, which reached its height during the peaceful reign of King Solomon. Religiously it ushered in a long era of prophetdom, while up to that time prophets had been sent by God only once in a great while. Samuel inaugurated schools of prophets, so that, beginning with those days, there was a distinct order of teachers of the people, called prophets. Besides the holy order of prophetdom an entirely new element was introduced into the body politic, to wit, a purely civil ruler, a king. Through David's conquests the Jewish state reached the summit of its power and expansion, while the building of the Temple at Jerusalem marked the acme of the ecclesiastical status. Schools of prophets — theological seminaries, we might say — had been established at Ramah, Bethel, Jericho,

Gilgal, and in other places. "Under the leadership of some elderly prophet, who was called their 'father' or 'master' (1 Sam. 10, 12; 2 Kings 2, 3), promising young men were gathered into these schools, and instructed in the interpretation of the Law, in music, and in poetry. Having gone through the school and completed the course of instruction, the prophet entered upon the duties of his office as an instructor of the people, leading all the while an austere and stern life."

Three kings reigned during this era: Saul, David, and Solomon. Saul's object was to train great battle-heroes. But as he made flesh his arm and departed from the Lord, his self-sought glory came to naught; he was abandoned by the Lord and forsaken by his doughty heroes, while his own sons died on the battle-field. David, however, was highly successful because the Lord was with him. From a humble station in life he was raised to the throne of which Saul had made himself unworthy. He rose higher and higher, soon made his people an independent nation, and expanded his kingdom, so that it extended from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. The scepter was now in the hands of the tribe of Judah. Gen. 49, 10. Solomon added to the glory of the kingdom, so that Israel became a highly honored nation. But, alas! he permitted idol worship alongside of the worship of the true God and thus paved the way for a division of the kingdom.

45. Saul, the First King of Israel. 1 Sam. 8-15

Israel Demands a King.

Samuel was old — He had judged Israel a long time, and the people's spiritual as well as bodily welfare had been in good, very good, hands. He lived at Ramah, a fortified town five miles north of Jerusalem. (Map 8.)

His sons . . . perverted judgment — To emphasize the great contrast between Samuel and his wicked sons, the holy writer makes three distinct statements: 1) They did not walk in the fear of God; 2) love of money had taken possession of their hearts, and therefore they even stooped so low as to take bribes; 3) as judges they acquitted the guilty one, the criminal, and condemned to punishment such as were innocent.

Elders — The heads of tribes were called elders. Besides, there was a body of elders appointed and selected for special duties. Every city had its elders.

Make us a king — When God made a covenant with Abraham, He said to him: "Kings shall come out of thee" (Gen. 17, 6), a promise which was subsequently repeated (Gen. 35, 11; 49, 10). This goes to show that the Lord had intended to give His chosen people a king at some future time, and for that reason He had Moses lay down laws by which the kings of His chosen people should be guided. Deut. 17, 14—20. But He wanted to give them a king in His own good time. Now the people demanded a king when *they* deemed it the proper time.

Like all the nations — They were not satisfied with the plain, unostentatious form of government, but wanted to boast of having a man who embodied all the powers of government in his own person, who would surround himself with the pomp and splendor of the kings of heathen nations, lead them on to victory in their battles with the enemy, and thus make them a powerful nation. — Lust of worldly glory and honor.

Rejected Me — The sentiment the people evinced proved but too clearly that they had forsaken, renounced, repudiated, the Lord. (Sin against First Commandment.) He therefore gave them a king in His anger, as we read Hos. 13, 11.

Saul Anointed.

Saul = "Desired." His father, Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, was a man of some wealth ("a mighty man of power," 1 Sam. 9, 1). Saul is called "a choice young man and a goodly," a handsome young man, of a fine and strong physique, and extraordinarily tall, yet well-proportioned — in those days when strength, courage, prowess, and a commanding presence was especially looked for in a leader of the people, a man whom all would be glad to welcome as their first king.

The asses of Kish were lost — The ass and the ox were the principal animals of burden and draught in those days.

The female ass was mainly used for riding. The animal subsisted on the coarsest food, so that even poor people could afford to keep several head of them. "So serviceable, and indeed essential, to man was this animal in ancient times that to drive away the ass of the fatherless was reckoned among the most atrocious acts of oppression and cruelty. Job 24, 3."

Mount Ephraim — The hill country of Ephraim, from Bethel to the Plain of Jezreel. (Map 3.)

A man of God — A prophet.

Captain over My people — Leader, especially in battle; a military leader. At the same time their temporal sovereign at all times — king.

Seer — One who sees, foresees, predicts future events; a prophet.

Set not thy mind on them — Do not worry about them.

On whom is all the desire of Israel? — Who will be chosen and anointed king of Israel? — the question uppermost in the minds of all the people just then.

Vial of oil . . . anointed — A vial, *i. e.,* a flask or small jug, was filled with perfumed oil or ointment and poured over the heads of prophets, priests, and kings, symbolic of their being consecrated to the Lord. The anointing of kings was performed by prophets or priests.

Kissed him — A sign of love and affection. The people were not only to honor and obey their king, but also to love him. (Cat., Qu. 43: "masters." — In Ps. 2, which is a prophecy of the King Messiah, all nations are called upon to kiss Him.)

His inheritance — Israel is in the Bible called God's inheritance, His possession, His peculiar people, because He had chosen it out of all other nations as the one to which He wanted to reveal both His holy and His good and gracious will, and out of whose midst the Savior of mankind was to rise.

Another heart — Endowed him with such gifts as he needed for his exalted office of king of His people.

Saul Made King.

Present yourselves — For the casting of lots, according to their tribes and innertribal divisions.

Families — Subdivisions of the tribes.

Hid himself among the stuff (baggage) — Note his modesty and humility. The office sought the man, not *vice versa*.

God save the king! — May the Lord bless him, and may we be a happy people under his rule!

Children of Belial — Worthless, vile, profligate people.

Saul's Heroism.

Ammonites — Descendants of Lot. They occupied the mountain regions of Gilead, between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok. The Amorites expelled them from the richest part of their possessions. Moses recovered the region from the Amorites and divided it between the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

Jabesh-gilead = "Dry Gilead." — One of the most important towns in Gilead in the days of the Judges; situated east of the Jordan. (Map 3.)

Thrust out all your right eyes — In this way he wished to wreak vengeance upon the citizens in retaliation for the severe defeat suffered by the Ammonites in the days of Jephthah. Judg. 11, 12 ff. A sample of the cruelty practised by heathen victors.

Came after the herd — Saul had till then led the life of a tiller of the soil.

The Spirit of God came upon Saul — He granted him wise counsel, as well as strength and power.

Hewed them in pieces — He summoned all Israel to action and by his symbolic action indicated what would be done to the oxen of such as would not obey his summons.

Coasts — Boundaries, borders, *i. e.,* to all the tribes of Israel.

Fear of the Lord — The Spirit of God moved them to come to the assistance of their king.

With one consent — With one accord.

Put them to death — Which they deserved for disobey-

ing their God-given king. (Table of Duties: "Of Civil Government": "sword"; "execute wrath.")

There shall not, etc. — A wise and a noble act, which gained him many friends among those who had formerly despised him and refused to acknowledge him as their sovereign.

Salvation — Deliverance from their enemies.

Saul's Disobedience.

Amalek = "Dweller in a valley." The Amalekites were a powerful people of uncertain origin. (Map 2.) Num. 24, 20 they are called the first of all the nations. Their name was to be blotted out from the earth because they had opposed the progress of Israel in the wilderness.

Spare them not — Every single individual was to be destroyed "with the edge of the sword, both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Spared the best — The fattened animals. — He had forgotten what God had told Israel through Moses, Deut. 35, 19: "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it," and insolently disobeyed the direct command of God through Samuel.

Vile and refuse — The lean and neglected, all the worthless animals.

Saul Rejected.

It repenteth Me — God never rues any act, never is obliged to feel sorry for anything He has done, as we sinful mortals must regret this or that action. Num. 23, 19: "God is not a man . . . that He should repent." Ps. 104, 31: "The Lord shall rejoice in His works." Dan. 9, 14: "The Lord, our God, is righteous in all His works which He doeth." What is meant here is this: God's intense *displeasure* was aroused at the flagrant disobedience of Saul. (See Gen. 6, 6.)

Not performed — Not only has he forgotten what I commanded My servant Moses (see above), but he has disobeyed the express command I gave him through thee, My prophet.

I have performed — He impudently states an untruth. Just like Adam and Eve — trying to defend and excuse his disobedience.

The people spared — He blamed it on the people. *He* had received the command to destroy Amalek.

To sacrifice unto the Lord — A self-elected work. But what had God told him through Samuel?

To obey is better than sacrifice — God alone has a right to tell us what to do, and only what He commands us to do is a good work, pleasing in His sight. (Cat., Qu. 180.) — Disobedience is unbelief.

Rejected thee — Your reign shall not last long any more, nor shall your sons succeed you on the throne of Israel.

Skirt of his mantle — Of the outer garment.

Neighbor of thine — David.

Better than thou — More God-fearing and obedient.

Ramah — His home.

Mourned for Saul — It saddened his last days to see that Saul did not repent of his ways.

Ps. 118, 8 — The people put their confidence in man by clamoring for a king in the way they did.

Catechism: Sixth Petition, Qu. 258.

Hymns: 83, 5. 10; 498, 6; 424, 2; 381, 1. 2.

Bible Readings: Deut. 17, 14—20; Ps. 50; Is. 1, 10—17.

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46. David Anointed King.

The first king of Israel had forfeited God's grace and blessing by disobeying His explicit command. The consequence was that the Lord rejected him. He had already found one who was to succeed him — David. The prophecy of dying Jacob regarding the leadership of Judah came true; for David was of the tribe of Judah.

David Anointed at Bethlehem.

How long wilt thou mourn, etc. — Samuel's mourning over Saul seems to have exceeded the proper measure and to have developed into dissatisfaction with the Lord's treatment of his (Samuel's) favorite.

Horn — Either an actual horn, which in the early history of Israel was often used as a receptacle for liquids, or a hornlike vessel.

Jesse — Grandson of Boaz and Ruth. Father of eight sons and a man of wealth. He was an old man at the time of David's combat with Goliath. 1 Sam. 17, 12.

I have provided Me a king — "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15, 18. I am not at a loss whom to find to succeed Saul; and he will be a man "after Mine own heart."

Called Jesse . . . to a sacrifice — Because Samuel feared he would be killed by Saul, who would regard him as a rebel in case he learned that he had anointed one of Jesse's sons king, the Lord provided an excuse for his going to Bethlehem by telling him to invite Jesse and his sons to a sacrificial feast.

I have refused him — Rejected him; he is not My choice.

The Lord looketh on the heart — Knowing all the thoughts of men's hearts, the Lord's standard of judgment of men is unerring, infallible. (Cat., Qu. 104: "omniscient"; Ps. 139, 1—4: "searched," "known," etc. See also v. 23.)

Are here all thy children? — Are those all the children you have?

Behold, he keepeth the sheep — Why, he is too young and inexperienced, Jesse means to say, to be called to the office of king! — He had not even been invited to the family sacrifice!

Send and fetch him — That is just the one whom the Lord has chosen.

David — "Beloved, darling." He was born in Bethlehem about 1100 years before the birth of Christ, whose ancestor and type he was. We do not know his mother's name, but David twice (Ps. 86, 16; 116, 16) calls her the Lord's handmaid; she, therefore, was a true child of God. David was of short stature, as compared with his brothers, but was strong and agile, fleet-footed. While still a youth, he slew a lion and a bear that had attacked his flock. 1 Sam. 17,

34—36. His feet were as agile as hinds' feet, and his strength was such that he could break a bow of steel. Ps. 18, 33. 34. He had bright eyes, a "fair face," while most of his countrymen were rather dark-hued, tawny, swarthy, and was red-haired ("ruddy"). He had great, indeed, extraordinary, talents for music, which he developed while shepherding his flock on the fields near Bethlehem. He seems to have been able to play several instruments; he had especially mastered the harp, an instrument of eight or ten strings, probably like our guitar. Gen. 4, 21.

Arise, anoint him — David was the direct choice of the Lord.

The Spirit of the Lord, etc. — The Lord endowed him with the gifts fitting him for the high office to which he had been divinely appointed. Undoubtedly he attended Samuel's school of prophets at Ramah and there received a thorough instruction in the Word of God (the five books of Moses).

David the Harp-Player.

An evil spirit troubled him — Because Saul had disobeyed and forsaken the Lord and did not sincerely repent, but hardened himself against the gracious working of the Holy Spirit (Cat., Qu. 183: "obstinately resist"; Acts 7, 51), God's Spirit no longer could dwell in his heart, and in His stead an evil spirit took possession of him, filled him with hatred and malice, with jealousy and envy, with fear and dread, made him morose, sullen, and intensely melancholy, and temporarily deprived him of the proper use of his senses, causing him to rave like a madman. — What a piteous spectacle! Formerly a vessel of God's grace and a pattern of divine virtues, now taken captive by Satan at his will! Luke 11, 24—26; 2 Tim. 2, 26.

Cunning in playing — "Cunning" = skilled. The servant also laid stress on the fact that the Lord was with this son of Jesse (1 Sam. 16, 18); he was a spiritual singer, whose playing and singing would prove a mighty weapon against the evil spirit. (Cat., Qu. 115; 1 Pet. 5, 8. 9: "resist in the *faith.*")

Stood before him — Was his personal attendant.

Became his armor-bearer — Bore his weapons, stood by him in danger, and carried his messages — a sort of adjutant. To become the armor-bearer of a king or general was considered a high honor.

Saul was refreshed — The evil spirit speedily took flight when he heard the harpist sing the praises of God. This was naturally felt as a great relief by Saul; nevertheless, he did not again turn to God.

Catechism: First Commandment (David feared and loved God; therefore exalted by God like Joseph); Sixth Petition; Cat., Qu. 258 (Saul).

Hymns: 498, 6; 271.

Bible Readings: Ps. 113; 92, 12—15; Matt. 4, 1—11.

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47. David and Goliath. 1 Sam. 17

David was still a youth, probably about eighteen years of age, when Samuel anointed him. But he had to wait very patiently, about twelve years, before he was able to take the reins of government. Meanwhile the Lord prepared him in various ways for the assumption of the duties of his high office. One step in this direction was his combat with Goliath, which made him the national hero.

Goliath's Boastfulness.

Now — Probably some three years after the anointing of David.

Philistines — See Lesson 41.

Gathered together their armies — They had been defeated not long ago by the prowess of Jonathan, Saul's son (1 Sam. 14), and the memory of that event rankled in their bosoms. It was a war of revenge.

A valley between them — Valley of Elah, southwest of Jerusalem. (Map 8.)

Goliath = "Splendor."

Giant — Probably a descendant of the Anakim, a race of giants only partly destroyed in the days of Joshua. Josh. 11, 22.

Six cubits and a span — "The *cubit,* or distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger, is estimated at from eighteen to twenty-one inches. The *span,* or the distance between the extremities of the thumb and little finger in the outstretched hand, is reckoned as half a cubit." Goliath's height, accordingly, was between nine feet nine inches and eleven feet four inches.

Helmet — A covering for the head of a soldier, in earlier times made of hides of animals. Goliath's helmet was of "brass", *i. e.,* of copper or bronze (copper and tin). It was crowned with a crest, or plume.

Coat of mail — A network of iron rings or rows of bronze pieces like scales overlapping one another. It covered the body upon and below the chest and back. Goliath's coat of mail was unusually heavy, weighing at least 150 pounds.

Greaves of brass — Splints, or strips, of bronze to protect the legs from the missiles and weapons of the enemy.

Target of brass — A copper lance, or javelin, which was slung across his shoulders.

His spear — A ponderous weapon, the staff of which was as thick as the shaft of a loom, four to five inches in diameter, and the head of which weighed nearly twenty pounds. — Also a *sword* is mentioned.

Choose you a man — He challenged any one to fight in single combat with him.

If I kill him, etc. — He was sure of the victory, and in that case Israel should become tributary to the Philistines, an enslaved nation. — In ancient times battles between two opposing armies were often averted in that way; for the result of such a duel was regarded as a divine judgment.

David's Courage.

David . . . returned from Saul — He was Saul's armor-bearer, but he had not been sufficiently trained in warfare to be of much use to Saul in this campaign, — at least, so

Saul thought, and for that reason he was sent home when Saul led his army to battle with the Philistines.

Uncircumcised — Heathen, spiritually unclean, "stranger from the covenants of promise." Eph. 2, 12.

Armies of the living God — He must remember that he is not fighting against a dead idol, but against the almighty God in heaven, in whom we trust, and whose people we are.

Rehearsed them — Repeated them to Saul, using the very words David had spoken.

Thy servant — A courteous term of self-disparagement.

Youth — Inexperienced in the handling of arms, especially in single combat.

Man of war from his youth — It has been his trade, so to say, since he was able to use weapons.

The Lord will deliver me — Mark the heroic faith, the childlike trust in the Lord's help.

David's Victory.

The Lord be with thee — Though fallen from the grace of God, Saul sometimes still spoke the language of the children of God.

Proved — I have had no experience with them.

Staff — Shepherd's staff. — A shepherd's *rod* (see Ps. 23, 4) was a short oaken club for defense; the *staff*, a longer pole for use in climbing or for leaning upon. An Eastern shepherd still carries both.

Shepherd's bag — "Probably a bag in which young lambs unable to walk were carried."

Sling — "The sling was an early weapon of war, by which stones were thrown with great force and surprising accuracy of aim. The slingers ranked next to the archers in efficiency."

Disdained him — "Gave him only a contemptuous glance."

Staves — What kind of weapon have you there? I disdain to meet you in combat!

Shield — The shield, one of the earliest pieces of armor, was usually made of light wood and covered with several folds or thicknesses of stout hide, which were preserved and

polished by frequent applications of oil. Is. 21, 5. Sometimes the shield was made either entirely of brass or gold, or covered with thick plates of those metals. It was of various forms, but generally circular or oblong. It was held by the left arm. The outer surface was made more or less rounding from the center to the edge, and, being polished smooth, made the arrows or darts glance off or rebound with increased force. The edges were armed with plates of iron, not only to strengthen them, but to preserve the perishable part from the dampness while lying upon the ground. (Schaff, *Bible Dict.*)

Cursed David — In the name of the Philistine gods he called all imaginable evils down upon the head of his youthful opponent. (Second Commandment.)

The Lord of hosts — The great God of heaven and earth, who is surrounded and adored by myriads of angels, obedient and willing servants. — Contrast with this the idols of the heathen: lifeless, speechless, powerless images or blocks of stone, etc., man's handiwork. (First Commandment.)

The Lord will deliver thee — Goliath (with a curse): "*I* will give thy flesh," etc. David: "The *Lord* will deliver thee," etc.; then first follows: "*I* will smite thee," etc. David's trust was in the Lord. (First Commandment.)

All the earth — All the nations round about will hear of this and will be obliged to acknowledge that Israel's God is the true, living God.

Sword — Short, two-edged, resembling what we call a dagger. It was carried in a sheath or scabbard, and suspended from the girdle, or belt.

Their champion — By far their most valuable soldier. They had relied so fully upon gaining the victory over Israel through him that, when he was dead, they were wholly discouraged and were seized with a panic.

Note. — David, in his single combat with Goliath, was a type of Christ, who, single-handed (Is. 63, 3: "alone"), as our Substitute, engaged the hellish Goliath in a deadly struggle and gained the victory for us. Gen. 3, 15; 1 John 3, 8; Heb. 2, 14; Col. 2, 15; 1 Pet. 3, 18. 19.

Catechism: First Commandment, Qu. 16 ("trust in God"); Second Commandment, Qu. 22 ("curse").

Hymns: 273, 1. 2; 363, 1; 526, 1. 13; 501, 7; 498, 6.

Bible Readings: Ps. 33; 75, 5—11; Eph. 6, 10—18; 1 Pet. 5, 5—7.

48. David and Jonathan. 1 Sam 17-20

When Saul and the Israelitish army trembled because of the proud and haughty challenge of that dreaded giant, the king promised to give his daughter in marriage to any man among his people who would dare to accept that challenge and kill the champion of the Philistines; in addition he would "enrich him with great riches" and exempt him and his father's house from taxes and from every form of public service. 1 Sam. 17, 25. But he failed to keep his promise when young David had slain the Philistine; what is more, he was filled with envy and hatred against the nation's hero and sought to remove him from the land of the living in some way or other. — However, the Lord gave David a mighty protector and pleader at the royal court — Jonathan, who became his trusted, loving, intimate friend. Indeed, as the story of Ruth gave us the finest example of filial affection, so the story of Jonathan and David is the most beautiful record we have of affectionate, warm, faithful, and, particularly on the part of Jonathan, unselfish friendship.

Jonathan's Friendship.

As David returned, etc. — About in the thirty-fifth year of Saul's reign. David was about twenty-four years old. Saul requested his services at the royal court at Gibeah, his capital, "and would let him go no more home to his father's house." 1 Sam. 18, 2. (Gibeah was about four miles northeast of Jerusalem. Map 8.)

Jonathan — The eldest son of Saul and consequently heir-apparent to his throne. "Handsome and high-mettled, full of nerve and full of heart, Jonathan was the pride of the army and the darling of the common people." He

performed deeds of daring in one of the campaigns against the Philistines. "He struck the first blow for freedom." In pleasant contrast to his father he was pious and God-fearing. One of the finest characters delineated in the Old Testament. "The name of Jonathan will remain forever as the perfect pattern of friendship."

Knit with the soul of David — The hearts of both friends were closely and firmly united. "Two hearts that beat as one."

Made a covenant — They sealed their friendship by solemnly promising to befriend each other in good and evil days.

He loved him as his own soul — His noble aim was to do what God has commanded us to do with regard to *all* our fellow-men: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22, 39; 7, 12. (Sum of Second Table.) — As to what David said of his love for Jonathan, see Lesson 49 (last sentence).

Saul's Jealousy.

Women . . . singing . . . instruments of music — Responsive singing, together with dancing, of groups of women. (See p. 130, *sub* "Miriam.")

Saul . . . thousands . . . David . . . ten thousands — Saul was a gallant leader in battle and had gained notable victories; but the killing of the giant Goliath by David unaided was equal to destroying a large army without the loss of one man on their, the Israelites', side.

Wrath . . . eyed David — The latter was the cause; the former, the effect. Because he begrudged David the larger measure of praise ("eyed" him jealously), his former love of David (1 Sam. 17, 21) turned into intense, murderous hatred. (Ninth and Fifth Commandments.)

More but the kingdom — Samuel had told him some years ago that the Lord would take the kingdom from him on account of his disobedience.

Javelin — "A small spear used as a scepter." — First the murderous *thought,* then the *act.* (Cat., Qu. 81; Jas. 1, 15.)— And David was Saul's benefactor!

Smite . . . to the wall — Pin him to the wall.

Avoided out of his presence — Dodged the missile.

Afraid of David — Realizing that David was under divine protection, he was seized with a superstitious fear.

Removed him — From his position at court.

Made him his captain over a thousand — Over one of the great tribal divisions (colonel, commanding officer of a regiment). No doubt, he expected or hoped that his young rival would lose his life in battle.

The Lord was with him — He blessed him in all his military undertakings against the enemies of Israel.

Saul gave him Michal — His second daughter. But he promised to give him this daughter on condition that he would kill a hundred Philistines, Israel's enemies, again hoping that, in trying to perform this deed of heroism, he would lose his life. David killed twice that number, and now Saul had to keep his promise.

Jonathan's Faithfulness.

They should kill David — So fully did Saul permit himself to be governed by the evil spirit that he tried to seduce even others to become murderers of David; for, since David had committed no evil deed, to do the king's bidding in this case would have been sin. (Cat., Qu. 44; Acts 5, 29.)

Jonathan spake good of David — He proved himself a true friend of David. It was not an easy matter for him to show his own father how wrong he was doing and to laud the good deeds ("works") of him against whom Saul was harboring a deadly hatred. He told him outright that he would be a murderer (shed "innocent blood") if he would not retract his order to kill David. (Eighth Commandment: "speak well of him." Cat., Qu. 71.)

The evil spirit . . . upon Saul — A change of mind, such as experienced by Saul after Jonathan had so lovingly appealed to him to spare David's life, or often when David would sing spiritual songs to him, did not last very long.

David . . . escaped that night — After dodging the javelin, he went to his house, which seems to have been built on the

town wall, like Rahab's at Jericho, and was let down at night by his wife outside of the wall, which gave him an opportunity to flee unobserved. He went to his fatherly friend Samuel at Ramah and was miraculously protected. (See 1 Sam. 19, 18—24.)

David . . . said before Jonathan, etc. — Jonathan had found David's place of refuge. David begged Jonathan to give another proof of his friendship by telling him frankly whether he, like his father, believed him to be guilty of some misdemeanor punishable by death. (In those days of absolute monarchies a king would have a subject's head struck off immediately if he had but roused his anger in some way.)

Jonathan said, etc. — 1) He promised David to find out how his father was disposed toward him. 2) He promised to give him a secret sign after three days which would tell him whether his life were in danger or not. 3) He promised to regard the agreement they had made with each other some time ago as absolutely binding until death ("forever"). (Eighth Commandment: opposite of "not betray.")

Jonathan's Intercession.

New moon — The Feast of the New Moon was celebrated with special sacrifices at the beginning of every month. Besides the daily sacrifice "two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without spot" were offered. Num. 28, 11. It was a day of rejoicing. The sacrifice of Saul was an abomination in the sight of God because it was made without faith. (Second Commandment: lying and deceiving by God's name.)

The king sat him down — "The chief table was arranged for four, the king's place being near the wall farthest from the door, his son's on the right, the great general Abner's on the left, and David's opposite."

The son of Jesse — Saul's hatred of David was so great that he would not even utter his name.

Against Jonathan — Saul suspected Jonathan of siding with his enemy, and also the queen, whom, in his fit of anger,

he called a "perverse" (doing wrong wilfully and stubbornly) and "rebellious woman" (resisting his royal authority). No doubt, the queen, like her son Jonathan, feared and loved the Lord.

To thine own confusion — Ruin and disgrace.

Not be established — Your position will not be secure. You are working against your own interests. How foolish!

Cast a javelin at him — Another most deplorable step downward on the road to perdition. First envy and hatred against David; then he tries to kill him, twice; now he does not even shrink from laying his hands on his own son! He was fully in the power of Satan. (Sixth Petition.)

Parting of David and Jonathan.

Beyond thee — When David, in his hiding-place, heard these words of Jonathan, he knew that his life was in danger.

His artillery — His implements of warfare — bow, quiver, and arrows.

Kisses . . . wept — A most painful parting. David wept most of all, "for the future now looked very dark for him." — David and Jonathan saw each other only once more. See 1 Sam. 23, 16—18.

Go in peace — Jonathan tried to comfort his dear friend by assuring him of God's "peace," the divine blessing.

As we have sworn — They both renewed their covenant of true friendship; and this was to extend also to their children and children's children ("my seed and thy seed forever"). — David later had an opportunity to make good his promise. 2 Sam. 9, 1—13.

Catechism: Qu. 9. 10.

Hymns: 395; 109; 88.

Bible Readings: 2 Sam. 1, 17—27; Ps. 133; 1 John 3, 11—18; John 13, 34. 35.

49. Persecution of David and Saul's Death.

After David had bidden Jonathan a sad farewell, he became a fugitive and lived in banishment for at least two years, until the death of Saul. "This period of his life, difficult and perilous though it was, was invaluable to him. It consolidated his character and enlarged his resources. It built up for him the strong nucleus of an army. It taught him kingcraft. It made him a popular hero. Best of all, it proved and tested his faith in God."

The Flight.

Nob — Five miles southwest of Gibeah, Saul's capital, near which David took leave of Jonathan. Nob was a city of the priests. The Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant were there during Saul's reign.

Ahimelech — High priest; great-grandson of Eli.

Show-bread — (See p. 152.) Only the priests were allowed to eat the show-bread, which was removed from the golden table after new bread had replaced the old on each Sabbath-day. But here was a case of necessity; and therefore our Lord Himself said, Matt. 12, 3, that David, being in need of strengthening food, which then he could not obtain elsewhere, did not sin in eating this bread.

The sword of Goliath — As David was compelled to flee direct from his hiding-place in the field when Jonathan warned him of the danger threatening him, he was without weapons. Goliath's sword, which had been placed in the Tabernacle as a memorial of the great victory God had given Israel, now was to be of good service to him.

David . . . fled — He took refuge in the country of the Philistines to be out of Saul's reach and jurisdiction. Here the poor fugitive had to play the madman, otherwise the Philistines would have chased him out of their country. See 1 Sam. 21, 10—15. — A madman, with the heathen, was held to be "sacred from injury."

Four hundred men — Men who had a just grievance against Saul (1 Sam. 22, 1. 2) and were in trouble of some kind, as well as his nearest relatives, gathered about David

(later there were as many as six hundred, 1 Sam. 23, 13). This little, but well-organized company of soldiers performed many a daring deed. Out of it, after David's ascension to the throne, grew that powerful, well-nigh invincible army of which the sacred historian tells us so much.

Doeg, the Traitor.

Conspired against me — Saul suspected all his courtiers of having framed a conspiracy against him, under the leadership of Jonathan, for the purpose of deposing him from his royal seat and placing upon it him whom he considered his worst enemy. (Cat., Qu. 64: thinking evil against one's neighbor; Zech. 8, 17.)

Doeg — A member of the despised race of Edom (descendants of Esau). His name has become a byword for "traitor" — "the Iago of Hebrew history."

Victuals — Food on the way.

Footman — Members of his body-guard, who also acted as executioners.

Doeg slew the priests — One of the basest, most abominable deeds of which sacred history bears record.

David Spares Saul.

Engedi = "Fountain of a Kid"; on the western shore of the Dead Sea, east of Hebron; "a range of bleak rocks, tenanted only by the fleet chamois, or wild goats, and eminently defensible." On all sides the country is full of caverns, which could easily give shelter to 1,500 men. "These caverns are as dark as midnight; one can see outwardly clearly, but to see four paces inward is impossible." Here David and his 600 men were hiding from the insane wrath of Saul. (Map 8.)

In the sides of the cave — In a dark recess. Saul, therefore, could not see David and the men with him, while the latter, aided by the faint light streaming into the cavern from its entrance, could discern his every movement.

Behold, this is the day, etc. — Not a small temptation for David! What his men said had a show of right.

Cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily — He stole up noiselessly to the king, but refrained from following the sinful advice given him.

The Lord forbid, etc. — True fear of God governed his action. (First and Fifth Commandments.)

My master . . . anointed of the Lord — Whom, according to the Fourth Commandment, he must honor and love. (Table of Duties: "Of Subjects." Cat., Qu. 42; 1 Pet. 2, 18: "also to the froward.")

The Lord judge, etc. — He remembered the words of God. Deut. 32, 35; Lev. 19, 18. (Cat., Qu. 47; Rom. 12, 19.)

More righteous than I — Overcome with emotion, realizing that David had rewarded him good for evil (Cat., Qu. 48; Rom. 12, 20), Saul momentarily gave way to better sentiments. But he experienced no real change of heart; later he pursued David again. 1 Sam. 26. Alas! he was a slave of Satan. He "obstinately resisted the Word and Spirit of God," etc. (Cat., Qu. 183; Matt. 23, 37; Acts 7, 51.)

The Lord reward thee, etc. — This blessing came upon David.

Samuel died — David deeply mourned his death, as did all Israel. During the three hundred years, from the death of that great leader Joshua to the time of Samuel, there had been a most deplorable falling away from God. Samuel had been a great reformer, a powerful preacher of repentance, a faithful shepherd of his people, the founder and leader of schools of prophets (theological seminaries), as well as a most illustrious teacher of "children of the prophets" (students of theology, the future teachers of God's people). It was very fitting, therefore, that "all the Israelites" accorded their departed prophet the honor of a public burial with holy rites. (Cat., Qu. 44. Table of Duties: "What the Hearers," etc.: "esteem them very highly," etc.)

Ramah — The deceased prophet's birthplace and home. (Map 8.)

Saul's Fear.

Gathered their armies together — All able-bodied men of the nation were mustered for a general campaign.

Saul . . . was afraid — Knowing that God was not with him and learning of the formidable army marching against him, he was seized with great apprehensions as to the outcome of the battle. Fear and love of God and childlike trust in Him were wholly lacking. (First Commandment.)

The Lord answered him not — Because he did not seek the Lord with a true heart. He took the name of the Lord in vain by "inquiring of the Lord" in such a frame of mind (hypocrisy). (Cat., Qu. 27; Matt. 15, 8.)

The Witch of Endor.

A familiar spirit — A witch, a woman who pretended to communicate with the dead and to be able to foretell future events. "Familiar" here means a household servant (derived from the Latin). Those who claimed to have communication with the dead (necromancers) were supposed to have the evil spirits at their command, so that they had to give them whatever information they wanted. — In the early years of his reign, Saul had driven all the wizards and witches out of the land. Now he engages the services of a diviner himself! (Cat., Qu. 26.)

Endor = "Spring of Dor"; a place in Issachar, where Sisera and Jabin were slain, about 6½ miles from Jezreel. (Map 7.)

By night — Christ said: "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light . . . lest his deeds should be reproved." John 3, 20.

Whom shall I bring up unto thee? — As though she had power to summon the spirits of the dead at will. — "Bring *up.*" "There was a common belief that the dead were in a place somewhere beneath the earth, under the ground, and that their souls could be summoned from there." (*Pop. Com.*)

Samuel said, etc. — Although there are those who believe that the Lord permitted the real Samuel to appear to Saul and to warn him of what was awaiting him, it is undoubtedly correct to hold that, since the souls of the departed children of God are "blessed . . . from henceforth" (Rev. 14, 13), the Lord does not send them to earth again, even for a sup-

posedly good purpose. Luke 16, 27—31. The spirit said: "Thou and thy sons shalt be *with me.*" 1 Sam. 28, 19.

The Lord hath rent the kingdom — The devil speaks the truth whenever it suits him.

With me — Satan knew that he had the hardened apostate king fully in his power.

Saul's Death.

Mount Gilboa — East of the Plain of Jezreel, at the boundary of Samaria and Galilee. (Map 7.)

Slew Saul's three sons — Among them Jonathan.

Sore wounded — Badly wounded with arrows.

Abuse me — He feared that the cruel Philistines would torture him unmercifully.

Saul took a sword, etc. — He committed suicide. A person who commits suicide 1) destroys the life that God has given him, which therefore can rightfully be taken only by Him (by such means as He is pleased to use); 2) cuts off the time of grace, thus making it impossible for him to repent and be saved. (Fifth Commandment: not kill my fellow-man, much less myself.) — "My God, for Jesus' sake I pray Thy peace may bless my dying day."

Strip the slain — To take from the dead Israelitish soldiers whatever was of any value to them.

Fastened his body, etc. — Saul's headless body hung there, a butt of rude ridicule — an exasperating insult to the defeated, headless army.

Bethshan (Beth Shean) — Five miles west of the river Jordan. (Map 7.) — Just recently excavators in Palestine found the "house [temple] of Ashtaroth" (1 Sam. 31, 10) in Bethshan in which the Philistines put the armor of Saul.

Jabesh-gilead — See Lesson 45, p. 226.

Burned them — Probably because the bodies were so badly mutilated that they did not seem to be fit for burial.

Their bones — "The charred remains after the flesh had burned off."

David lamented, etc. — Composed a song of mourning, "one of the noblest odes of sorrow ever written"; also called

"The Song of the Bow" because of the reference to Jonathan's bow. 2 Sam. 1, 19—27.

Brother Jonathan — Jonathan was as dear to him as a brother, — even more so.

Thy love to me was wonderful — Remarkable, much beyond the ordinary, was Jonathan's love of David — he sought only David's gain though aware of the fact that it meant a temporal loss to him.

Catechism: Second, Fifth, and Eighth Commandments.
Hymns: 507; 391, 6; 365, 3; 347.
Bible Readings: Pss. 52, 54, 57, 59; Rom. 12, 19—21; Ps. 73.

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50. David Becomes King. 2 Sam. 1-7

David was about eighteen years of age when he was anointed by Samuel. As he was thirty years old when he was made king of Judah, he was compelled to wait about twelve years until his hopes of actually obtaining the reins of government were realized. Not only could he not take the reins into his hands as long as Saul was in power, but his life was made most miserable by him whom God had rejected on account of his disobedience. These years of bitter adversity, however, were of great benefit to him, especially spiritually. During these years he wrote some of his best psalms. — But finally the Lord's hour had come, and now David, trained in the school of the Lord, was well prepared to wield the scepter for the benefit of God's people. He was the best king Israel had.

David Reigns at Hebron.

Hebron—About twenty miles south of Jerusalem. (Maps 3 and 5.) Abraham lived near the town (in Mamre), and he and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah, were buried in the cave Machpelah, also near the town. In the days of Joshua, Hebron was taken by Caleb, of the tribe of Judah. It was made both a Levitical city and a city of refuge. (See p. 34.)

King over the house of Judah — At first only the people of his own tribe acknowledged him as their God-given king.

Abner — Cousin of Saul and distinguished general of his army. He was "captain of Saul's host," *i. e.*, commander-in-chief of the army of Saul.

Ishbosheth . . . king over Israel — All Israel except Judah regarded him as the rightful successor of Saul. After a brief reign of two years his army was defeated by David's men, under the command of Joab, and he was assassinated.

All the tribes anointed David king — After he had reigned seven and a half years over Judah. A national assembly met at Hebron to proclaim David king also of the other eleven tribes. The elders, as spokesmen for the people, declared that even when Saul was king, it was David who was the real leader of the people. (David was anointed three times: 1) by Samuel at Bethlehem, 2) in the name of the tribe of Judah at Hebron, 3) by all the tribes of Israel, also at Hebron.)

David Makes Jerusalem His Royal Residence.

Jerusalem — (Maps 3, 5, 8.) Originally called Salem (Gen. 14, 18), then Jebus ("threshing-floor"). It was a stronghold of the Jebusites, a Canaanitish tribe, who were only partially subdued by Joshua. Josh. 10, 23. 40; 12, 10; 15, 63. — Jerusalem means "inheritance of peace."

Zion — The southwestern hill of Jerusalem. It was guarded by a strong wall. David built a citadel on Zion, his own palace, houses for the people, and a place for the Ark of the Covenant. (Map 10.)

The Lord delivered them, etc. — The Lord is the Giver of victories. (Cat., Qu. 122.)

He smote Moab and . . . Ammon — The Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot. Their country was east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. (Map 3.)

Brought gifts — They were obliged to pay tribute.

David gat him [got himself] *a name* — His great victories gave him great renown among the heathen nations round about Palestine.

Syrians — Syria was north of Palestine. (Map 4.) It was first settled by the Hittites and other Hamitic races.

All they of Edom — The Edomites, or Idumeans, descendants of Esau, living south of the Dead Sea. (Map 2.)

Became David's servants — His vassals; became tributary to him. — The blessing Isaac gave Jacob, "Be lord over thy brethren," was fulfilled here.

The Lord preserved David — Protected him.

The chosen men — The captains and leaders of the army, together with the best soldiers.

To bring up the Ark of God — (See Lesson 44, p. 220.) It had been in the house of Abinadab about seventy years ago. As Kirjath-jearim bordered on the country of the Philistines, David forestalled an attack by these arch-enemies of Israel by coming to the town with an army of picked men. At the same time, it gave the ceremony of getting the Ark and taking it to Jerusalem a national character.

With shouting — The people gave vent to their joy by "making a joyful noise unto the Lord." Ps. 100, 1. Shouts as of a victorious army.

With the sound of the trumpet — The trumpets were sounded on all festive occasions. (See p. 138.)

Set it in his place — In a space especially marked off in the Tabernacle.

Burnt offerings . . . peace-offerings — Burnt offerings, to confess his and his people's sins; peace-offerings (also called thank-offerings), to praise the Lord for His grace and mercy, especially for His goodness in permitting him to place the Ark of the Covenant in the capital of the kingdom. (Cat., Qu. 124.)

David's Kindness toward Mephibosheth.

For Jonathan's sake — He did not forget the promise he had made his bosom friend.

Mephibosheth — At the age of five he had fallen from his nurse's arm and become a cripple.

Did reverence — Prostrated himself in Oriental fashion to show due respect to the king.

Restore thee all the land — David gave Mephibosheth the entire estate of his grandfather ("father" in the Bible often = grandfather) Saul, which, very likely, had come into the possession of David upon his accession to the throne. Besides, Mephibosheth enjoyed the honor of being received into the royal family as a child. — David's example of kindness and living up to a solemn promise is worthy of being emulated by all children of God. (Fifth and Eighth Commandments.)

David Receives the Promise of the Messiah.

Nathan = "Given." A faithful prophet of God, David's court-preacher, so to speak, and, later, the teacher and educator of young Solomon. He seems to have reached a very old age.

The Lord had given him rest — Under the blessing of God, David had subdued all the enemies of Israel, so that the king and his people enjoyed peace and prosperity.

House of cedar — The cedar is one of the most valuable and majestic evergreen trees of Oriental forests: found in greatest perfection on Mount Lebanon. The wood is of a red color. It is very durable and therefore admirably adapted for building. Cedar was used for the finest and most costly edifices. Ezek. 31, 3—6 the cedar is described as being, in height, "exalted above all the trees of the field," with long, fair branches and with "a shadowy shroud," so that all the beasts of the field seek shelter under them. See also Ps. 92, 12; Song of Sol. 4, 11.

Ark of God . . . curtains — David had built a tabernacle (most likely, similar to the Tabernacle erected in the wilderness) with fine and costly curtains; yet it was only a *tabernacle* (a tent), and he was now living in a magnificent palace, built of the finest wood to be had. — Mark David's love of the house of God. (Cat., Qu. 35; Ps. 26, 6—8.)

Do all that is in thine heart — There was no doubt in Nathan's mind but that David's project was well-pleasing to the Lord.

Shalt thou build Me a house? — David was a king after

God's own heart, and he had accomplished much for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his people (temporal welfare: he had vanquished Israel's enemies, so that every one lived in peace and quiet in his own vineyard and under his own fig-tree; spiritual welfare: he reorganized, perfected, and beautified the worship of the Sanctuary; he had written beautiful psalms for public worship); but this he was not to do: erect a grand and beautiful house of worship. Nathan had not asked the Lord before he spoke to David in this matter. — The Lord wished to build a most glorious house for David!

When . . . thou shalt sleep with thy fathers — Long after David would be gathered to his people, the Lord would establish an eternal kingdom through one of his descendants ("thy Seed"), the Messiah, the King of kings, who would found a spiritual kingdom on earth ("He shall build a house for My name"), the Kingdom of Grace, His Church, which would endure to the end of days and be continued throughout all eternity as the Kingdom of Glory, the Church Triumphant ("I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever"). (Cat., Qu. 142.) — This Seed of David would, however, be not only David's son and therefore true man, but also God the Father's Son and therefore also true God ("I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son"; Second Article: "true God . . . from eternity . . . my Lord"; Nicene Creed: "very God of very God"), God and man in one Person — the wonderful God-man Christ Jesus. — David was so overwhelmed with joy and gratitude when he heard this prophecy that he went to the Sanctuary and there praised the Lord for the unmerited grace and favor bestowed upon him and his family and descendants. 2 Sam. 7, 18—29. — Jacob had foretold the descent of the Messiah from the *tribe* of Judah; now even the *family* was designated from which He would issue forth.

Catechism: Third Commandment; Cat., Qu. 35. Second Table, Qu. 36. 37. Second Article; Cat., Qu. 129—135. 142 (kingly office of Christ).

Hymns: 468; 464; 5; 8; — 197, 7; — 93; 104; 179, 1; 135, 4.

Bible Readings: Ps. 26; 27, 4—6; 84; — 1 Cor. 13; — Ps. 2; 45; 110; Matt. 21, 1—9; John 18, 33—37.

2 Sam 11-12

51. David's Sin and Repentance.

David was a great and a good king. He was a man after God's heart. Not only was he concerned about the temporal welfare of his people, he also did everything in his power to promote their spiritual welfare. And the Lord had endowed him with the gift of spiritual song and of prophecy. The Holy Spirit inspired him to write many prayers, hymns of praise, and most important words of prophecy which He desired to have embodied in the Old Testament Scriptures. He was a highly favored child of God. — But it is just such men of God, such pillars in the Church of God, Satan is bent on harassing with powerful and wily temptations and seducing them to sin, even to gross transgressions of God's holy commandments. We shall now hear how the old Evil Foe succeeded in enticing David to commit two most heinous sins. But, thank God, we shall also learn that he sincerely repented and was reinstated in God's favor.

David's Sin.

Children of Ammon — The Ammonites had grossly insulted and abused the messengers David had sent to the new king to express his sympathy at the death of his father. Joab subdued them and their allies and destroyed their cities. The king's crown was taken from his head and put on David's head, and the people were subdued to a state of abject servitude.

Rabbah = "Greatness." The capital city of the Ammonites ("Rabbath of the children of Ammon"). Its modern name is Amman. It was situated in the valley of the upper Jabbok and between two mountains, about 22 miles east of the Jordan. (Map 3.)

David tarried — Idleness is the mother of vice. David should have gone with his army. His past successes, and the prosperity he enjoyed, had made him less watchful and prayerful than formerly. Consequently, when temptation beset him, he was off his guard. (Sixth Petition.)

Roof — The roofs in the Orient are flat and are surrounded by a parapet, battlement, or balustrade, a matter of divine command in the case of God's people (Deut. 22, 8), lest one should heedlessly or unwittingly fall from them. The roof was a place of repose and resort.

Washing herself — Bathing herself in the basin of the courtyard.

Bathsheba = "Daughter of the oath."

Sent messengers — Under the pretext, no doubt, of wishing to see her in some important matter.

Uriah = "Flame of the Lord." A Hittite by descent, but no doubt converted to Judaism; commander of one of the divisions of David's army.

Took her — Adultery. (Sixth Commandment.)

Forefront of the hottest battle — Uriah was sent to attack a hopeless portion of the steep wall, where he was most likely to be killed by the enemy. — Murder in the sight of God. (Fifth Commandment.)

Retire ye from him — Leave him defenseless against the onrushing enemy.

Joab . . . assigned Uriah, etc. — He made himself a partaker of David's sin. 1 Tim. 5, 22.

She became his wife — With a show of right, as far as the people in general were concerned, who had learned neither of his adulterous act nor of the crime perpetrated upon Uriah.

David's Repentance.

Sent Nathan to David — Nathan did not shrink from doing his duty even when he was sent to deliver a hard message to the ruler of the land. He couched it in the allegory of the rich man and the ewe-lamb.

Exceeding many — An abundance of, very many.

David's anger — David had followed this story of the

prophet with eager and growing interest, believing it to be a true happening. He was enraged at the rich man for the shameful act he had committed, and said that he deserved to be put to death. He did not realize that *he* deserved to be put to death, that *he* was that rich man who had acted so shamefully.

Thou art the man — As fearless a preacher as John the Baptist, in the time of Christ, was Nathan.

I anointed thee king, etc. — David's double crime was all the worse because of the superabundant blessings which he had received. (First Article, by contrast: "For all which it is my duty," etc.)

Despised the commandment, etc. — Which he knew so well!

Thou hast slain Uriah — Your hand, it is true, did not kill him, but he was slain at your behest. *You* are the murderer in the eyes of the all-knowing God.

The sword shall never depart, etc. — Catechism, Close of Commandments: "A jealous God, visiting the iniquity," etc.

Out of thine own house — The following Bible-story will tell us about that.

I have sinned — David does not deny the evil deed, nor does he put the blame on others, as Adam and Eve did in Paradise, or endeavor to extenuate his awful crime. He humbly confesses and sincerely repents.

Put away thy sin — Has forgiven it, to wit, for the promised Messiah's sake. (Absolution. Cat., Office of the Keys, Qu. 300—308.)

Thou shalt not die — You deserve to be put to death according to the divine Law given by Moses. But the Lord will spare your life; and, above all, since you confess your sins with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, you shall not die the everlasting death. In the Thirty-second Psalm David says himself: "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

The child . . . shall surely die — This shameful deed of yours gave the enemies of the Lord, the unbelievers and the

hypocrites, occasion to say, There you see what kind of people those are who make such a great show of sanctity; their holiness is mere pretense! You have "given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." 2 Sam. 12, 14. (Cat., Qu. 229; Rom. 2, 23. 24.) — Therefore the Lord must send a chastisement: "The child that is born unto thee shall surely die." That will also show the people, when they hear of your sin, that the Lord is a holy God, who must and will visit the iniquity of men, even of mighty kings, upon them.

Ps. 51 — The psalm David wrote after he had confessed his sin to Nathan. He trusted in God's mercy.

Catechism: Fifth and Sixth Commandments; Third Article ("Forgiveness of sins"). Fifth Chief Part: Confession. Private Confession, Qu. 317.

Hymns: 381, 1. 4; 415; 414; 31, 5. 6.

Bible Readings: Pss. 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143.

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52. Absalom's Rebellion.

2 Sam. 14–19

Nathan told David when he rebuked him for his double crime: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." These words came true when his son Absalom rebelled against him and tried to steal the kingdom from him.

Absalom's Treachery.

Absalom = "Father of Peace." The third son of David by Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur, a district of Syria. 2 Sam. 3, 3. (Map 3.) His mother, therefore, was a heathen woman.

Praised . . . for his beauty — Every one spoke of him as the most handsome man in the kingdom. He heard many flattering remarks, which tended toward making him vain, proud, and haughty.

No blemish in him — He had a perfect physique: a hand-

some face, well-shaped and well-proportioned limbs, and a healthy, nicely developed body. But his character was not without blemish.

The hair of his head — He had a luxurious growth of beautiful hair, which, when he had it cut off at the end of each year, weighed six pounds. All this made him vain and proud. (Pride a sin against the First Commandment. Cat., Qu. 15; Jer. 17, 5.)

Absalom prepared him chariots, etc. — Apparently without the permission of his father he purchased state-chariots and horses (horses in those days were used only by kings and warriors; moreover, see Deut. 17, 16) and engaged footmen, trusted friends, guardians, and messengers. In other words, he courted power; he prepared himself to govern the kingdom, determined to take possession of it at an opportune moment. (Ninth Commandment.)

Gate — Probably the gate guarding the entrance to the royal palace.

Judgment — To ask the king, who was the supreme judge in civil matters, to render a just verdict in the case he wished to put before him.

No man deputed of the king — Though your case is "good and right," the king will not as much as listen to you nor give your case over to one of the judges whom he has appointed to judge cases of minor importance. (Eighth Commandment.)

I would do him justice — As long as my father is king, the people cannot expect to be treated fairly. Make me king, and you will find that justice will be properly dealt out to all.

Obeisance — Show him the reverence due a royal prince, or even the king himself, by prostrating himself to the ground.

Kissed him — To assure him that he was his true friend. "He wet his cheeks with artificial tears." He could "smile and smile and be a villain."

Stole the hearts — Fawningly insinuated himself into popular favor. (Tenth Commandment: "Entice away.")

The Rebellion.

Absalom went to Hebron - Hebron was Absalom's birthplace and David's former royal residence. (Map 8.) Absalom asked his father for permission to go there, making him believe that he wished to offer a sacrifice there in fulfilment of a vow he had made to the Lord. (Hypocrisy; lying and deceiving by God's name and "deceitfully belying" his father. Second and Eighth Commandments.)

Sent spies - Secret agents, or messengers. They called all the men to arms who were secretly in league with David's traitorous son.

Sound of the trumpet - Absalom had stationed men with trumpets on the tops of hills and mountains all over the country to give signals to the knowing ones. He was fully prepared to strike a decisive blow and to take the reins of government into his hands.

Conspiracy — Absalom's secret plot, or plan, to seize the throne of his father.

The people increased continually with Absalom — Every hour saw many more men coming who acknowledged Absalom as their king. Yet 2 Sam. 15, 11 we read that many "went in their simplicity, and they knew not anything," did not understand what all this meant.

Flee — David did not want to be taken captive, but he also desired to prevent a massacre at Jerusalem. He well knew Absalom's reckless determination and the fickleness of the inhabitants and therefore did not believe it advisable to offer resistance to the rebel army within its walls, but preferred to leave the city, fully convinced that only the most loyal men would follow him into what might mean misery and banishment for them. But with the aid of these loyal men (600 soldiers) he would be able to gather an army of staunch supporters of his just cause. — David left the city by the eastern gate.

Kidron — "Black Brook." A small stream, dry in summer, but growing into a torrent in the rainy season. Rises 1½ miles northwest of Jerusalem and runs in a southeasterly direction, emptying its waters into the Dead Sea. — Christ,

the antitype of David, crossed the same brook in the night when He was betrayed. (Also written Kedron and Cedron. Map 10.)

Household — Officers and servants at court.

Mount Olivet — Also called Mount of Olives, the scene of some of the most interesting events recorded in the Bible. The name is derived from the olive-trees which formerly abounded on the slopes of the mountain, and which still grow there to some extent. It was about 1½ miles east of Jerusalem. — The first time this mountain is mentioned in the Bible. (Map 10.)

Wept — David wept for two reasons. In the first place, he knew this was a chastisement sent by God for the heinous sin he had committed (see preceding lesson); and he was truly repentant and therefore humbled himself under the mighty hand of God. In the second place, however, he felt unspeakably sorry for his wicked son.

Shimei . . . house of Saul — A distant relative of Saul.

Cursed David — With a flood of profanity streaming out of his vile mouth he blamed David for the ruin of the house of Saul, calling him a throne-robber (2 Sam. 16, 8) and a cruel, bloodthirsty tyrant; "a son of Belial," *i. e.*, an utterly vile and disreputable man. — The children will be able to prove that these were shameful lies. (Second and Eighth Commandments.)

Come out — Out of the royal residence and the capital city, which ought not to harbor you!

The Lord hath said unto him — This, too, David humbly accepted as a well-deserved chastisement. (Cat., Qu. 48.)

Absalom . . . came to Jerusalem — Ascended his father's throne and usurped the reins of government.

Absalom Slain.

Numbered the people — Clever and circumspect general that he was, he at once ascertained the numerical strength of his small, but intensely loyal army of able and valiant fighters. He also chose the necessary officers and arranged the army in proper battle array.

Deal gently, etc. — How he did still love that ungrateful son! He was ready to forgive him and did not wish him any harm. — An appeal should be made to the children to consider how dearly parents love their children, and how it pains them to see them go astray.

Wood of Ephraim — (Map 3.) East of the Jordan, in Gilead, near the fortified town of Mahanaim and the river Jabbok, where Jacob had wrestled with the Son of God. Gen. 32. "This region is still covered with thick oaks, tangled bushes, and thorny creepers, growing over rugged rocks and ruinous precipices." Greater advantages for a small than for a large army. Hence Absalom's larger army was at a disadvantage.

Mule — Even kings and the most distinguished nobles of the Jews were accustomed to ride upon mules.

His head — The long hair of his head.

Caught hold of — His hair was caught in the boughs of the oak.

Taken up between, etc. — Suspended from the tree, he hung in mid-air, unable to touch the ground. (Picture.)

Joab took three darts — Joab, a man of a bloodthirsty, cruel disposition, wantonly disregarded the king's orders. He was only too glad to take revenge on the defenseless prince. — The *dart* was a short spear (smaller than the javelin, Num. 25, 7) and was cast, as is supposed, with the hand.

Great pit; heap of stones — A well-deserved monument of shame for a disobedient, rebellious son. — To this day the Tomb of Absalom, which he built during his lifetime in the Kidron Valley, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, is pelted with stones or spit at by the Jews, as they pass by, in execration of his treason. (Cat., Qu. 42; Prov. 30, 17.)

He wept — He particularly deplored the sad fact that his son had died in his sins, and for this reason he wished he had died instead of Absalom. A most heartrending lamentation it was which the unconsolable father set up. — Children, remember it breaks the hearts of Christian parents if they see a child die in an unrepentant state and know it to be eternally lost!

CATECHISM: Ninth ("craftily seek," etc.), Tenth ("entice"), Fourth ("despise, provoke to anger"), Second ("curse — lie by His name"), and Eighth ("slander, defame") Commandments.

HYMNS: 391, 5; 392, 4. — 65, 9; 507.

BIBLE READINGS: Pss. 3, 63, 41; 2 Sam. 22, 5—51; 1 Chron. 29, 9—19.

53. Solomon.

Israel had only three kings who reigned over the entire nation — Saul, David, and Solomon. After Solomon's death the kingdom was divided. — Solomon was a mighty and world-famed king, and during the early years of his reign he proved himself a worthy son of his great and God-fearing father and an obedient pupil of his teacher, the extraordinarily pious and faithful servant of God, the prophet Nathan.

SOLOMON ANOINTED KING.

David was old — About seventy years old.

Stricken in years — Worn out, enfeebled, under the weight of cares and troubles and burdens, as well as in consequence of the hardships he had to undergo during the years when Saul persecuted him.

Zadok — One of the two high priests during the reign of David (the other high priest was Abiathar). He remained faithful to David when Absalom rebelled against his royal father. Solomon rewarded his faithful services by making him sole high priest.

They blew the trumpet — Blowing the trumpet at festival occasions was the business of the priests.

Solomon = "The Peaceful." (A type of Christ, who gained true peace for all mankind by reconciling the sinner to God. Eph. 2, 14—17; Rom. 5, 10; 2 Cor. 5, 18—21; Rom. 5, 1.) Solomon's mother was Bathsheba. 2 Sam. 12, 24. 25 we read that "the Lord loved him," and that Nathan, by divine authority, called him Jedidiah, "Beloved of the Lord."

David . . . charged Solomon, etc. — When David saw his end approaching, he gave Solomon some wise advice and

paternal admonitions: 1) He should be "strong," strong in the faith and strong and courageous in the battle against sin and the devil. 2) He should "walk in the ways of the Lord," choosing the Word of God as "a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path," obeying a) the divine "statutes," the entire code of the Mosaic laws, b) the "commandments," the Ten Commandments in particular, c) the "judgments," especially the ceremonial and civil laws, and d) the "testimonies," the revelations of God's covenant with His people, His covenant of grace made in view of the work of redemption of the promised Messiah. If he would do so, he would experience God's blessing ("prosper in all that thou doest"). 3) He should consider it both a privilege and his duty ("the Lord hath chosen thee," etc.) to build the Temple which he (David) had contemplated erecting.

The pattern of the house of the Lord — A model, or sketch, of the Temple-to-be: the Temple proper with the Holy and Holy of Holies, the porticoes, the storerooms for the vestments of the priests and other precious things, the Court of the Priests and the Court of Israel (the people), "the treasuries of the dedicated things," etc. This sketch had been made for David by his architects and draftsmen. The Lord Himself had, probably in a vision, shown David in detail how the house that was to be erected to His name should be built. 1 Chron. 28, 19.

Gave for the house of God — Not only "the princes of Israel," but David himself — indeed, he most liberally — contributed "gold, silver," etc., toward the building of the Temple. See 1 Chron. 22, 14; 29, 1—9. (Cat., Qu. 35; Ps. 26, 6—8: "loved . . . Thy house.")

With perfect heart — Not in a spirit of vainglorioussness, but because they loved God and His Word and wished to glorify His name and see His kingdom come.

Willingly — "Not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9, 7.

Blessed the Lord — Praised Him, glorified Him.

David slept with his fathers — He died trusting in the merits of the promised Redeemer. The death of God's

children is a restful sleep, out of which they shall awake, on the Last Day, to enter the realms of eternal bliss and glory. (Cat., Qu. 203; Dan. 12, 2: "sleep." Hymn 540.)

His kingdom was established greatly — No one dared to rebel against him; all Israel acknowledged him as the rightful successor of David.

Solomon's Prayer.

Solomon loved the Lord — The Bible gives the young ruler of Israel the highest praise that can be given man.

Gibeon — That was still the official sanctuary. The Tabernacle was there. Gibeon was about five miles northwest of Jerusalem. (Map 8.)

Thou hast made Thy servant king — "The powers that be are ordained of *God.*" "He is a minister of *God.*" Rom. 13, 1. 4. (Table of Duties.)

But a little child — Humble language. Solomon was then about twenty years old; he was young and inexperienced.

An understanding heart — Wisdom to govern justly, wisely, and well. God was so pleased with this prayer that He made Solomon the wisest man of his time. 1 Kings 10, 7. 23. 24.

I have also given thee, etc. — If we first, above all, seek, and ask for, the spiritual and heavenly wisdom, the things we need for this life will be added unto us. (Cat., Qu. 247; Matt. 6, 33. 34.)

Riches and honor — He was the richest man of his time, and all the world honored and admired him for his extraordinary wisdom. 1 Kings 10, 24.

Lengthen thy days — God did *not* permit Solomon to reach an old age (he died at about the age of sixty) because in later years he sadly failed to walk in the ways of God. ("*If* thou wilt walk . . . , then I will lengthen thy days.")

Solomon's Wise Judgment.

Harlots — Women who were leading a wicked life.

Overlaid it — Unintentionally, in her sleep, she lay on the infant and thus choked it.

Considered it — Looked at it closely.

Divide the living child — A seemingly cruel, yet very wise command. He knew it would not come to this.

Her bowels yearned upon her son — She was intensely eager to save the life of her child even at the risk of losing possession of it. — "Bowels," in the language of the ancients, denoted all the internal organs of the body, including, principally, the heart; hence "bowels" = affections of the heart.

But the other said, etc. — Thus plainly showing that she was not the mother of the child.

Give her the living child — He had gained his wise purpose.

Wisdom of God — All honor was given to God. (First Commandment; Cat., Qu. 16.)

Catechism: First Commandment (fear and love God); Second Commandment and the Lord's Prayer (prayer); Fourth Petition ("pious and faithful rulers, good government").

Hymns: 20, 3. 4; 26, 2; 83, 1. 5; 246, 2; 396, 5.

Bible Readings: Ps. 111; Prov. 3, 1—20; Ps. 72; Ps. 127; 1 Kings 10.

1 Kings 5–8

54. The Building of the Temple and Solomon's Death.

By far the most noteworthy event of Solomon's wise and extraordinarily prosperous reign was the building of the national house of worship, the magnificent and beautiful Temple at Jerusalem. And he built it in the proper spirit, too, not in order to satisfy his vanity, to spread his fame, but because he wished to glorify God and build His spiritual kingdom on earth. The place where His honor dwelt was to be a structure worthy of His glorious name — the best he and his people were able to give. — Had he but shown this spirit throughout his reign! But, alas, later in life he yielded to temptations and became an idolater and a servant of sin — a warning example for us.

Preparations for Building the Temple.

Hiram — A distinguished king, who was on terms of friendship with David and Solomon and seems to have come to a knowledge of the true God and believed in Him. Under his reign the city of Tyre became celebrated for its wealth and magnificence.

Unto the name of the Lord — It was a laudable purpose which prompted Solomon to build the Temple. (Second Commandment; First Petition.)

Cedar-trees out of Lebanon — "The finest specimens of the cedar-tree grew on the northwestern slopes of Lebanon." David had procured the building material for his cedar palace from the same source.

Fir-trees — The fir-tree, growing on Mount Lebanon (Map 6), was a tall, straight tree, almost as large as the cedar, of fine appearance, and was used in the frame and ornamental work of costly edifices.

Bare burdens . . . hewers — Carrying burdens and cutting stones, considered too mean a labor for Israelites, was done by members of conquered races. Deut. 29, 11; Josh. 9, 21. 27.

Ruled over the people — Overseers, foremen.

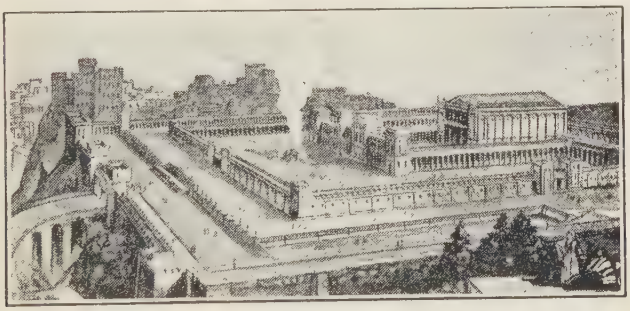
Costly stones . . . foundation — Only the very best material was to be used for the entire sacred structure, and therefore even the stones for the foundation were to be good and flawless. — The best is not too good when it is to be used in the service of the Lord and His kingdom. Remember that when you bring your offerings to church.

The Building of the Temple.

Solomon began to build, etc. — In the fourth year of his reign, about in the month of May.

The length thereof, etc. — The arrangements of the Temple were identical with those of the Tabernacle, but the dimensions were twice as large. It was erected on the eastern hill of Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, on a quadrangle 900×600 feet. The Temple proper (exclusive of the porch, halls, and courts) was 90×30×45 feet (length, width, and height, respectively). It was built of white and rose-tinted

marble and of the choicest and most enduring woods. Like the Tabernacle, its front was toward the east. On the east side was a colonnade. This opened on a large quadrangle, within which was a smaller court, the Court of the Priests. Here was the altar of burnt offering, or brazen altar, a square chest of wood, plated outside with brass, filled inside with stone and earth, with the fire on a brass grating at the top, the whole placed on a mass of rough stones. South of it was the brazen laver, used for the ablutions of the priests. Round about the smaller court were chambers for the priests. In the corners were the kitchens and boiling-

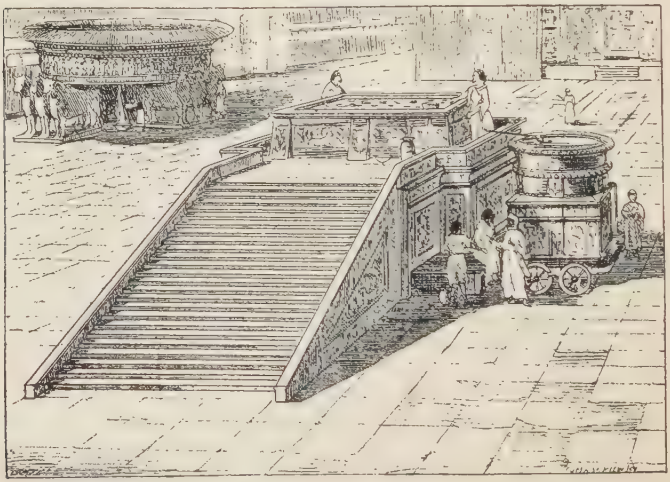


Temple of Solomon.

apparatus. Facing the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was the porch with its two elaborate pillars. A pair of folding-doors led into the Holy Place with its altar of incense, the table of show-bread, and the seven-armed golden candlestick. From this sanctuary the high priest, once a year, entered the Holy of Holies (see p. 153), which was separated from the Holy Place by a heavy, richly embroidered curtain, the "wall of partition." (See Eph. 2, 14.) The Holy of Holies was a small chamber, 30 feet square, containing the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy-seat. (The mercy-seat foreshadowed Christ, the "propitiation" [literally, "mercy-seat"] for our sins. Rom. 3, 25.) — Though the Temple proper was not a large structure, yet on account of the choicest material used in its construction, and because

the whole interior was overlaid with gold and studded with precious stones, it was the most magnificent edifice in the world at that time, B. C. 1005, and the pride of all Israel. "There has not been in ancient or modern times a sacred building equal to the Temple, whether for situation or magnificence."

Neither hammer nor ax . . . heard — Out of holy reverence for the great and glorious Lord Jehovah all avoidable noise was forbidden.



Altar of Solomon's Temple.

Seven years was he in building it — As 183,000 people, Jews and strangers, were employed for seven years in building this magnificent house of worship, we need not wonder when it is estimated that the cost of construction amounted to about 2,450 million dollars in our money.

From the Bible record of the construction of Solomon's Temple the Illinois Society of Architects has drawn up the following list of costs according to present-day values [the total of which exceeds by far the above conservative estimate]: Building materials in the rough, $12,726,685,000; gold, silver, and brass used in construction, $34,399,110,000; gold and jewels used for vessels,

$1,876,491,515; silver, ditto, $3,246,730,000; for priests' vestments and robes of singers, $10,050,000; for trumpets, $1,000,000; food for the laborers at 45 cents each a day for seven years, $344,385,440; wages, $34,574,100,000; gifts to overseers and laborers, $33,669,885. Total, $87,212,210,840. This bill of costs seems almost too exact; at any rate, it shows that David's and Solomon's enterprise was well worth being numbered with the seven wonders of the world even from the modern viewpoint.

Theol. Monthly.

THE DEDICATION.

All the men of Israel, etc. — Representatives of all the twelve tribes. The concourse of people was so great that it required 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep to feed them.

The glory of God, etc. — The Lord desired to show His people that He was pleased to dwell in this Sanctuary with His gracious presence. Ex. 20, 24; 40, 34; Lev. 16, 2; Num. 9, 15.

Spread forth his hands — Solomon offered a dedicatory prayer. The Temple was "sanctified with the Word of God and prayer." 1 Tim. 4, 3. (Dedication of our churches and Christian day-schools. — To dedicate means to set apart for sacred use, for the glory of God.)

Cannot contain Thee — God is a spirit, who cannot be circumscribed, enclosed within limits. He is omnipresent — "above all and through all and in you all." Eph. 4, 6. (Cat., Qu. 104.)

Respect unto — Give special attention to, heed.

Thine eyes may be open, etc. — He implored the Lord to vouchsafe His gracious presence whenever the sacrifices prefiguring, and pointing to, the Great Sacrifice of the promised Messiah would be offered here.

When Thy people be smitten down, etc. — The people of God were to offer up prayer to the Lord in His Temple every day (daily sacrifices were prescribed with prayer and thanksgiving); but they were to do so especially in days and times of trouble and distress, of divine visitation and punishment on account of sin: 1) defeat in battle and oppression by the enemy ("smitten," etc.); 2) drought ("no

rain"); 3) long-continued drought so that no harvest could be gathered ("famine"); 4) malignant contagious or infectious and deadly disease or epidemic, causing a frightful mortality and spreading throughout the country ("pestilence . . . plague"); 5) when any member of a family was stricken down with a disease of any kind ("sickness"). (Cat., Qu. 209. 211.)

Forgive Thy people — The children of God in the Old Testament had no other faith and were taught no other way of salvation than we Christians in the New Testament. 1) They knew that they were sinners in the sight of God, transgressors of His commandments: the sin-offerings were mute confessions of the people's sins. 2) Every Israelite also knew that he could not expiate his sins and merit God's favor, but that, if he was to be acceptable with God, his sins must be forgiven for the sake of Him who would become a Sacrifice for them. (Great Day of Atonement. Mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies. Pss. 32, 51, 130, etc. — See Acts 15, 11: "They," the Old Testament believers, were "saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.")

A feast — It lasted fourteen days.

Solomon's Last Days.

Many strange women — Deut. 17, 17 God had expressly stated that if Israel would choose a king, he should not "multiply wives to himself." — God wants only one man and one woman to live together in holy matrimony. Gen. 2, 24; Matt. 19, 4—6 ("they twain [two] shall be one flesh"). (Cat., Qu. 51.) — Not only, however, did Solomon have many wives, but, what was still worse, "many *strange* women," heathen women. He thus set aside the divine prohibition recorded Ex. 34, 16; Deut. 7, 7.

After other gods — For that very reason the Lord had forbidden His people to be united in marriage with those who did not worship the true God. — Unspeakably sad! (First Commandment.) — Evil of mixed marriages to this day: danger of being seduced to false doctrine and even entire apostasy from the faith.

Rend the kingdom from thee — With God there is no respect of persons; He punishes the great and mighty of this world as well as the poor and humble. (Cat., Qu. 104: "holy, just"; Is. 6, 3; Dan. 9, 7: "righteousness.") — Solomon had forsaken the Lord, and therefore God could not continue to bless him as He had promised to do if he would walk in His ways.

For thy father's sake — God withheld His punishments in some measure during the lifetime of Solomon because of his pious father's sake. (Close of Commandments: "showing mercy," etc.)

Rent it in twelve pieces — A symbolic act, by which the prophet corroborated the words of his prophecy. Solomon's successors were to keep only a small portion of his kingdom.

Solomon's Death.

Forty years — Just as long as David and Saul.

Slept with his fathers — These words seem to indicate that Solomon repented of his idolatrous and sinful life some time before his departure from this life. It is generally believed that he wrote Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher, in his old age, and this may be regarded as a confession of a penitent sinner. — However, at any rate the life of Solomon sounds a note of warning to all Christians to watch and pray lest they fall into temptation and make shipwreck concerning the faith. (Sixth Petition.)

Catechism: Third Commandment (Qu. 35), First and Second Petitions. — Sixth Petition ("God would guard and keep us . . . finally overcome," etc.).

Hymns: 454; 457; 459; 468. — 379; 381; 396, 7. 8.

Bible Readings: 1 Kings 8; Ps. 84. — Ps. 139, 23. 24; Rom. 11, 11—22; 1 Cor. 10, 1—13.

From the Division of the Kingdom to the Captivity at Babylon.

(975—588 B. C.)

Israel was united under one kingdom for a comparatively short time only, to wit, under the reign of Saul, David, and Solomon. In the days of Solomon the glory of Israel as a nation reached its climax. When Rehoboam, Solomon's son, succeeded to the throne, ten of the twelve tribes revolted, and elected their own king, Jeroboam; and from that time on there were two kingdoms, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin being ruled by kings from the house of David ("kings of Judah"), while the "kings of Israel," of various dynasties, ruled the ten tribes. Of the latter, 19 in number (not counting Tibni), not one was a godly man; of the former, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah upheld the worship of the true God more or less. Following is the list of rulers of both kingdoms: —

Kingdom of Judah.

King.	Length of Reign.	B. C.
1. Rehoboam	17 years	975—957
2. Abijam	3 "	957—955
3. Asa	41 "	955—914
4. Jehoshaphat	25 "	914—889
5. Jehoram	6 "	889—884
6. Ahaziah	1 year	884—883
7. Athaliah	6 years	883—877
8. Joash	40 "	877—838
9. Amaziah	29 "	838—810
10. Uzziah	52 "	810—758
11. Jotham	16 "	758—742
12. Ahaz	16 "	742—727
13. Hezekiah	29 "	727—698
14. Manasseh	55 "	698—643
15. Amon	2 "	643—641
16. Josiah	31 "	641—610
17. Jehoahaz	3 months	610
18. Jehoiakim	10 years	610—599
19. Jehoiachin	3 mo. 10 da.	599
20. Zedekiah	11 years	599—588

End of kingdom: 588 B. C.

Kingdom of Israel.

King.	Length of Reign.	B. C.
1. Jeroboam I	22 years	975—953
2. Nadab	2 "	953—952
3. Baasha	24 "	952—930
4. Elah	2 "	930—929
5. Zimri	7 days	929
6. Omri	12 years	929—918
7. Ahab	22 "	918—897
8. Ahaziah	2 "	897—896
9. Jehoram	12 "	896—883
10. Jehu	28 "	883—856
11. Jehoahaz	17 "	856—840
12. Jehoash	16 "	840—824
13. Jeroboam II	41 "	824—783
Anarchy	11 "	783—772
14. Zachariah	6 months	
15. Shallum	1 year	772—771
16. Menahem	10 years	771—760
17. Pekahiah	2 "	760—759
18. Pekah	20 "	759—739
Anarchy	8½ "	739—730
19. Hoshea	9 "	730—722

End of kingdom: 722 B. C.

55. The Division of the Kingdom.

The Lord's threat to divide the kingdom of all Israel on account of Solomon's base ingratitude over against the superabundant blessings which He had bestowed on him were not uttered in vain. Everything came to pass just as His prophet had spoken. He is a jealous God, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." He must and will punish sin.

Rehoboam's Folly.

Rehoboam — As far as the Bible record goes, the only son of Solomon. His mother was Naamah, a heathen princess of the kingdom of Ammon, on the borders of the desert east of Jordan. (Map 3.) His name means "enlarger of the people," expressing the hope of the father for his son; instead, he became the diminisher of his people!

Shechem — (Sychar in the New Testament.) Thirty miles north of Jerusalem, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. (Map 7. See pp. 193. 194.) It was a place sacred to Israel; Abraham had worshiped there; Joseph's remains were buried there; Joshua had assembled all Israel there shortly before his death and prompted the people to renew the covenant with God.

Jeroboam — The leader of the ten tribes and their spokesman. The Lord's prophet had told him (see preceding lesson) that he would become king of ten tribes.

That stood before Solomon — His royal counselors. "Stood" — custom demanded that the officers and counselors of the king stand while in his presence.

Thy father made our yoke grievous — Solomon had laid extremely heavy taxes upon the people to enable him to maintain the excessive royal splendor and to erect numerous public buildings; in addition, he had forced the people to perform servile labor for him at these buildings and had them lashed with whips whenever they showed any sign of insubordination or laziness (similar to that tyrant Pharaoh). (Fifth and Seventh Commandments.)

Scorpions — An instrument of punishment resembling a whip, but so formed with knots or small stones as to cause each blow to inflict a stinging pain. (The sting of the spider-like animal called scorpion is attended with excruciating pain.) — This answer gave evidence of a proud, haughty, and cruel disposition on the part of the young nobility. What a change for the worse since the days of David! (Total disregard of the command to love their neighbor. Cat., Qu. 36. 37.)

Answered the people roughly — With contemptuous, insulting words. — This happened according to the counsel of the Lord (1 Kings 12, 15: "The cause was from the Lord"), whose hour to punish the house of Solomon had come.

What portion have we in David? — We feel no obligation to remain under the rule of the house of David.

To your tents! — A signal for open rebellion.

Judah . . . Benjamin — From that day to the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity the kings of Judah ruled over only those two tribes, — though the Kingdom of Judah at times equaled, if not excelled, the Kingdom of Israel (of the ten tribes) in power and authority.

Jeroboam's Idolatry.

Jeroboam's kingdom was not only much larger than the kingdom of Judah (about as large as the State of New Hampshire), but it was also richer and the soil much more fertile than the hilly regions of Judah. If the people had continued in the fear of God, their history would have been far different from what it soon proved to be.

Jeroboam . . . made two calves of gold — Probably made of wood, but overlaid with gold. (Aaron's golden calf.) Jeroboam wanted to save his kingdom by disobeying God's laws! But disobedience to God is always followed by divine punishment. (Close of Commandments.)

Too much for you, etc. — According to God's specific command "all males" should "appear before the Lord God" "three times in the year": at the Passover Feast, at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and at the Feast of Tabernacles. Ex. 23, 17; 34, 23; Deut. 16, 16. And Jeroboam had the *blasphemous audacity* to tell the people that this was putting too great a burden on them! — But besides being blasphemous speech it was sheer *hypocrisy;* he did not mean what he said. The real reason why he did not want the ten tribes to go to Jerusalem is given in the preceding sentence: "Now shall the kingdom," etc. (First Commandment; Second Commandment: blaspheming God and lying by His name.)

Behold thy gods — The two golden calves probably were to represent the true God; the people were told to worship the Lord Jehovah under these images; but the Lord had expressly forbidden Israel to make "any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above," etc., and to "bow down to them" (Ex. 20, 4. 5), not even under the pretense of praying and sacrificing to the true God.

Bethel . . . Dan — Bethel was near the southern boundary of the ten tribes (12 miles north of Jerusalem), while Dan was in the extreme north of the kingdom. (Map 3.) Bethel was regarded as a sacred city: Abraham had built an altar there (Gen. 12, 8); Jacob had the vision of the ladder reaching to heaven and later built an altar there; and Samuel judged Israel in this town. Dan was at the base of Mount Hermon. (Maps 3 and 5.)

JEROBOAM'S PUNISHMENT FORETOLD.

Abijah = "Whose Father is Jehovah." The very name Jeroboam had given his son was a standing reproof to him after his apostasy. The young prince himself remained true to his name. See 1 Kings 14, 13.

Disguise thyself — He wanted to deceive the Lord's prophet and, in the end, God Himself. What a foolish undertaking! (Cat., Qu. 104; Jer. 23, 23. 24; Ps. 139, 1—4.) He hoped to obtain a favorable reply, very likely by bribing the prophet.

Heavy tidings — Heavy to bear, hard to endure; news causing sorrow and distress.

I exalted thee . . . thou hast made thee other gods — 1) God's great kindness to Jeroboam; 2) Jeroboam's base ingratitude. (First Article: "richly . . . provides me . . . my duty to thank," etc.)

Evil upon the house of Jeroboam — "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers," etc. (Close of Commandments. Cat., Qu. 86; Ezek. 18, 20.)

Till it be all gone — Because he had not only himself committed idolatry, but had "made Israel sin," by seducing the ten tribes to idol-worship, he and his godless children and children's children were to be punished so as to be a warning to others.

The dogs . . . the fowls of the air eat — God carried out His threat. 1 Kings 15, 29; 16, 3. 4; 21, 21 ff. (Close of Commandments: "Therefore we should fear His wrath," etc.)

Tirzah — The capital of the kingdom of Israel for fifty years, until Samaria was built by King Omri. (Map 7.)

Catechism: First and Second Commandments; Close of Commandments; First Petition.

Hymns: 346, 3; 347. — 278, 1. 2; 408.

Bible Readings: Prov. 1, 5—33; Joel 2, 1—14; Jer. 10, 1—16; 17, 1—10; Ps. 12.

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56. The Prophet Elijah.

1 Kings 16.17

Seventy to eighty years had elapsed since the kingdom was divided. Jehoshaphat, a pious king, was sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem, while Ahab was king of the ten tribes. He was the seventh in the line of the kings of Israel. All his predecessors: Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri, who had founded Samaria, had been godless kings. The ten tribes sank ever deeper into the mire of sin, above all, the sin of idolatry. And King Ahab was not the man to bring his people back to God; on the contrary, he exceeded his predecessors in wickedness. Nevertheless God did not reject His people, but time and again sent them faithful prophets to call them to repentance. By far the greatest of these prophets during the reign of Ahab was Elijah.

Elijah at the Brook Cherith.

Ahab = "Father's brother." Seventh king of Israel. He reigned about 900 years before the birth of Christ. His father, King Omri, had not brought him up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. His reign lasted twenty-two years.

Did more to provoke the Lord, etc. — He was the most wicked of all the kings of Israel.

Jezebel — Daughter of Ethbaal, the heathen king of Tyre, northwest of Canaan. (Map 3.) She was the virtual ruler of Israel; being of a domineering disposition, she succeeded in making her royal husband obedient to her will.

He . . . served Baal — Baal (meaning, "Lord, Master") was the sun-god of the Phenicians, their principal male god. Human victims were offered to him. Elevated places were selected for his worship. Ahab maintained 450 priests of

Baal. — Jezebel introduced the worship of the main goddess of her native country, Ashtoreth (Astarte), the moon-god, called "the queen of heaven." Four hundred priests of Ashtoreth were in her employ. The worship of this idol was connected with lewdness.

Samaria — Thirty miles north of Jerusalem. (Map 3.)

Elijah = "My God is Jehovah"; a very fitting name for this illustrious prophet of God. He was a native of Gilead, east of Jordan. His birthplace was Tishbah (he is called "the Tishbite"), ten miles east of Jordan.

As the Lord liveth — Whose prophet I am and at whose command I have come to you.

Not dew nor rain — As a punishment for Israel's falling away from God. In that hot country a drought is a much more severe visitation than in temperate zones. And as a very heavy dew falls in Palestine, the absence of also this godsend renders the situation still more dreadful. See Lev. 26, 19. 20; Deut. 11, 16. 17.

These years — Indefinite time; until Israel will repent.

According to my word — Which will prove to you that I am the messenger of the living God.

Hide thyself — Ahab will have the whole country scoured to get you into his power and to take your life.

Brook Cherith (gorge, ravine) — Evidently an ever-running brook, fed by springs and shaded by trees. Other brooks and streamlets ran dry after the rainy season was over.

Ravens . . . feed thee — All creatures must do the bidding of God. The ravens, these rapacious birds, which had stealthily taken bread and meat wherever they could find it, had to deposit it in the hiding-place of Elijah. — A missionary in India tells how ravens often snatched food from his children while they were eating. Their haunts are in the wildest districts such as the persecuted prophet of God was hiding in now.

So Elijah did — Which showed that his was a strong faith. He trusted implicitly in the promise of God.

No rain in the land — Elijah's prophecy came true. Ahab's and Jezebel's idols were powerless to send rain upon the parched earth. — Still the people did not repent.

ELIJAH AT ZAREPHATH.

The brook dried up — After Elijah had been there probably a year.

Zarephath — "Smelting-house." Called Sarepta in the New Testament. Luke 4, 26. A town in Phenicia, on the shore of the Mediterranean, between Tyre and Sidon. (Map 3.) The prophet had to travel about 85 miles afoot to get there. It was the native country of Queen Jezebel. — As this was outside the limits of Israel, no search could be made for Elijah there. (Hymn 394, 1: "He cares for us . . . by His might.")

A widow woman — Another severe test of the prophet's faith. The Lord does not even mention the name of the widow, nor does He give Elijah definite direction how to find her house. — Fie and shame upon Israel that a faithful prophet of Jehovah had to be provided for by a heathen woman!

Was there — Outside of the gate of the town.

A little water — The refreshment he most sorely needed after traveling through the hot and parched countryside.

Morsel of bread — Though probably half starved, yet he would be satisfied with just a bite or two.

As the Lord liveth — She seems to have known and worshiped the true God, though she was a heathen woman. (The Syrophenician woman in the days of our Savior.) — This oath of Elijah was to awaken trust in the Lord and in the word of His messenger and therefore was God-pleasing. (Cat., Qu. 25.)

I have not a cake — The usual flat cake of unleavened dough, no thicker than a pancake, of a circular or oval form, ten to twelve inches in diameter.

Meal — Most likely barley-flour.

Barrel — An earthen jar.

Oil — Olive-oil, eaten with bread, much as we eat butter.

Cruse — A bottle, probably of earthenware.

Dress it — Prepare it for eating.

Eat it and die — It was her last food, and as grim famine stalked over that country as well as over Israel, she despaired of obtaining any more.

Make me a little cake first — A severe test of her faith.

Shall not waste — Not diminish, not grow less. — Would she believe God, especially since the divine promise was confirmed by an oath of the Almighty? She did stand the test. (First Commandment: childlike trust in God; Cat., Qu. 16.)

Her house — Her son and either her servants (slaves) or starving relatives who came to her when they heard of the miracle God was performing at her house day by day. — Having received a prophet in the name of a prophet, she received a prophet's reward. Matt. 10, 41. (Cat., Qu. 35; Gal. 6, 6.)

Many days — Until the famine ended, two to three years.

According to the word of the Lord — God is faithful; He keeps His promises, Ps. 19, 8; a God of truth, Ps. 31, 5. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 33, 4.)

The Widow's Son Restored to Life.

No breath left in him — The widow's son died from a severe ("sore") attack of some malady.

Call my sin to remembrance — In her sad affliction, Satan harassed her with the thought that on account of her sins she, after all, was not worthy of harboring a holy prophet under her roof; and now she was being punished for her presumptuousness! — God was again testing her faith. (Sixth Petition; Cat., Qu. 257.)

Give me thy son — Elijah's faith, too, was put to a hard test; but he fully believed that the Lord would perform a miracle through him, His servant.

Carried him up in the loft — Into the upper chamber, the widow's guest-chamber, to which the prophet was wont to retreat, not only for rest, but also for prayer. — The houses in those countries generally were only one story high;

but often one room ("upper room") was built on one side of the roof, which served various purposes, and which would be reached from below either by an outside or an inside staircase.

Elijah cried unto the Lord — Elijah was a powerful pleader with the Lord.

Soul . . . came into him again — At death, soul and body are separated. Eccl. 12, 7.

The Lord heard the voice of Elijah -- The first instance of a raising from the dead recorded in the Bible. Elijah was the first mortal who besought the Lord to perform such a miracle. — How this miracle must have strengthened the faith of both the prophet and the widow! The latter was now all the more assured of the fact that Elijah's message was the Word of the living God.

CATECHISM: First Commandment ("trust"); Conclusion of Commandments ("God threatens to punish"); First Article, Qu. 121; Third Article ("resurrection").

HYMNS: 363, 1. 2; 498, 1.

BIBLE READINGS: Jas. 5, 16—18; Luke 4, 16—30.

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57. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18

The Lord had miraculously sustained His faithful prophet during the years of famine. In obedience to His command he now betook himself to King Ahab. In a most solemn and impressive manner it is shown in our lesson that not Baal, but Jehovah is the true God. Elijah becomes the restorer of the broken covenant, a true reformer.

ELIJAH SENT TO AHAB.

Third year — After he had gone to the widow at Zarephath.

Show thyself unto Ahab — More than ordinary courage was needed to do so, for Ahab had strained every effort to get bodily possession of the prophet with the intention of killing him.

I will send rain — "I" to be emphasized; *I*, Jehovah, not Baal; *I*, the God of your fathers.

Troubleth Israel? — Ahab blamed Elijah for the fearful famine with which the country had been afflicted for three and a half years, instead of laying the blame where it belonged — at his own door. But he did not think of repenting.

I have not . . ., but thou — Ahab's bold and impudent question does not embarrass the prophet in the least. The

Mount Carmel.

latter tells the king frankly that he and his father's house (the entire royal family) are the cause of this severe visitation of God. (Cf. the words of Nathan spoken to David.)

Baalim — Plural of Baal. The idol was worshiped under various forms.

Now, therefore, etc. — I want to tell you that I shall make it most evident to everybody that has eyes to see that Jehovah, and not Baal, is the true God.

Mount Carmel — A range of mountains about twelve miles long, "one end jutting into the Mediterranean Sea in

a bold bluff over 500 feet high, extending thence southeast, until it abruptly breaks off in an inland bluff over 500 feet above the sea level. Its highest elevation is nearly 1,740 feet. The scene of the famous contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal was near the east end of the ridge. A well is near, and a slippery path leads down to the Kishon, several hundred feet below. This stream is now called 'River of Slaughter' in memory of this event." — At the present day there is a large monastery of the Carmelite monks on that mountain. (Map 6.)

The Challenge.

All the people - The elders and heads of the people that had gathered there on Mount Carmel together with the king.

How long halt ye — Incline to God one moment and to Baal the next, like a lame man that swings his body first to the right and then to the left in walking. A very pertinent illustration. (See Matt. 6, 24 and Luke 11, 23.)

Answered him not a word — They were still undecided. They first wanted to see which of the two, the prophets of Baal or Elijah, would carry the day.

I, even I only, etc. — The worship of Baal had become, so to say, the established religion of the country, and there seemed to be no one who remained faithful to the true God.

Bullocks - Young bulls, the animals usually offered in sacrifice.

Dress — Prepare it fully for the act of sacrifice.

The God that answereth by fire — Who will send fire from heaven, so that the sacrifice will be a burnt offering.

Let him be God — He shall be publicly acknowledged to be the true, living God. Elijah did not doubt in the least that the Lord would answer his prayer and perform a mighty miracle to the glory of His name.

The Prophets of Baal.

No voice, nor any that answered — No fire was seen to fall from heaven.

Mocked them — Full of holy zeal for the Lord, he made sport of their futile efforts.

He sleepeth — He is a god that cannot keep awake all the time, though he is supposed to rule the world unceasingly.

Cut themselves with knives — To gain the favor of the god. Every heathen religion is a religion of works: man must merit the favor of God with self-imposed hardships. — The children may be told of the practises of so-called "holy men" of India and other heathen countries in our day who torture themselves in various ways, hoping thus to become acceptable with those in whose hands they believe their fate to rest.

Neither voice, etc. — For a fitting description of the utter impotence of idols see Ps. 115, 5—8.

"The Lord Is God!"

Come near unto me — Now I shall perform before your very eyes what I promised to do. Observe me closely and convince yourselves that I am not employing a trick of any kind, as the false prophets frequently do, to deceive you.

Repaired the altar of the Lord — Ahab or Jezebel had commanded to destroy the altars on which sacrifices had been offered to the true God.

Fetch water — In order to render the miracle to be performed in the name of the Lord all the greater and to establish it as a divine miracle beyond the cavil of a doubt.

Fill four barrels with water — Water-jars such as the maidens used to carry on their heads. — Notwithstanding the awful drought, Elijah was able to get the water he needed for the trench from a perennial spring (which still exists) on Mount Carmel.

Elijah said, Lord God, etc. — The prophets of Baal had "called from morning even until noon"; Elijah sent up a short, but powerful prayer to the living God.

I am Thy servant — Thy true prophet. — A most solemn moment!

The fire of the Lord fell — Supernatural fire. (Story of the destruction of Sodom.)

Licked up the water — The climax! The fire of the Lord consumed 1) the burnt sacrifice, 2) the wood, 3) the

stones (remarkable!), 4) the dust, 5) the water (otherwise water extinguishes fire!).

Fell on their knees — They were overwhelmed with the astounding miracle.

The Lord, He is the God — Now they were convinced that Jehovah was the true God, and that Baal was an impotent idol.

Take the prophets of Baal — Elijah at once seized the opportunity, while religious fervor inspired the people, of having the false prophets put to death as God had commanded to do. Deut. 13, 5.

Brook Kishon ("bending, curved") — Empties its waters into the Mediterranean north of Mount Carmel.

Slew them there — Ahab did not dare to withstand the prophet of God.

Get thee up — To a higher place on the mountain.

Great rain — In answer to Elijah's prayer. (See 1 Kings 18, 42 ["cast himself down upon the earth," to wit, to pray] and Jas. 5, 18.)

Catechism: Second Commandment ("in every trouble"); First Petition, Qu. 229; First Commandment, Qu. 15.

Hymns: 60, 4. 8; 273; 377; 380.

Bible Readings: Deut. 13; Ps. 115; Jer. 2, 4—14; Rom. 1, 18—25; 1 John 4, 1—16.

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58. Elijah in the Wilderness.

After so many years of apparently fruitless teaching and preaching, admonishing and rebuking, the Lord had vouchsafed to give His faithful prophet and courageous witness Elijah a great victory over the forces of Satan, which until then had all but wiped out the true religion in Israel. Astounded at the miracle upon Mount Carmel, the people had again publicly acknowledged Jehovah as the true God and had executed the false prophets in obedience to the Law of God. But days of distress and utter discouragement fol-

lowed upon this day of holy triumph achieved by Elijah. However, the Lord kept the weary prophet from despairing by comforting him and strengthening his faith.

Elijah's Flight.

All that Elijah had done — Ahab told Jezebel — 1) that Elijah had demanded that he, the king, assemble all the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel; 2) that he had then challenged the people and the prophets of Baal to prove by a sign from heaven that Baal was the true God; 3) that he publicly made a laughing-stock of their, Ahab's and Jezebel's, prophets; 4) that he succeeded in bringing fire down from heaven, with the consequence that the people acknowledged Jehovah to be the true God; 5) that he killed all the prophets of Baal (that was the climax); 6) that he brought down rain from heaven.

Take his life — Jezebel swore an oath by her idols that she would have him put to death the following day.

Wilderness of Beersheba — In the extreme southern boundary of Judah. (Abraham had lived in Beersheba.) There Jezebel's henchmen would not look for him. (Map 3.)

Under a juniper-tree — Probably the broom-plant, bearing pink blossoms ("a striking picture in the desert landscape"). "Plenty large enough," writes one who has been in Palestine, "to shelter Elijah from the sun."

Requested . . . that he might die — The prophet was disheartened. No sincere and lasting change had taken place in the people. Were all his labors, was all his zeal, in vain? Lord, let me die and enter Thy eternal rest! Being a sinner like all my ancestors, I do not desire to pass to the blessed mansions above without seeing death.

There was a cake, etc. — The Angel of the Lord, the Son of God, had miraculously placed bread and water at his side. Elijah was faint with hunger after his hundred-mile march from Jezreel to Beersheba.

Forty days and forty nights — Miraculously strengthened by that meager meal, he was able, like Moses, to be without food for almost six weeks.

Horeb — (See p. 114.) About 200 miles south of Beersheba. Horeb is in the Mount Sinai region. Called "mount of God" because God had appeared to Moses there in the burning bush and given the Ten Commandments to Israel. (Map 2.)

Elijah at Mount Horeb.

What doest thou here? — A tender reproof, but at the same time an encouragement to tell the Lord all his troubles and worries.

Jealous for the Lord — He had defended the honor of the Lord, even in the presence of the mighty ones of the earth.

Slain Thy prophets — These prophets of God were Old Testament martyrs for the cause of God and His Word.

I only am left — Thy Church, O Lord, has died out in Israel.

Go forth — Out of the cave.

Wind . . . earthquake . . . fire — The Lord desired to show Elijah that the Law alone, comparable to a destructive storm, earthquake, and fire, will never convert man and bring him back to God.

Still, small voice — The sweet message of the Gospel is the only means of melting the hearts of sinners, even hardened sinners, such as the Israelites had become. — That was a lesson for Elijah's future activity in the service of the Lord. (Cat., Qu. 101.)

Wrapped his face in his mantle — An act of reverence and awe. Sinners cannot endure the light of God's holy countenance.

Go thy way and anoint, etc. — Hazael became a mighty king and harassed both Israel and Judah with wars.

Syria — North of Palestine; capital, Damascus. (Map 4.)

Jehu — Commander-in-chief of Ahab's army.

Elisha = "God is salvation." He first became Elijah's disciple and later his successor ("in thy room" = place). His home was Abel-meholah, somewhere in the Jordan Valley.

I have left Me seven thousand, etc. — A great consolation

for the discouraged servant of God. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." 2 Tim. 2, 19. (Cat., Qu. 186.) The Church of God is invisible.

Cast his mantle upon him — A symbolic action designating Elisha as the successor of Elijah. He "conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal. 1, 16), but was willing at once to enter the service of the Lord, although he knew that no pleasant days were awaiting him in such service.

Catechism: Third Commandment and Second Petition (zeal for the Word and the kingdom of God). Third Article ("I *believe* in a holy Christian Church").

Hymns: 110; 278; 279; 505.

Bible Readings: Ps. 12; Acts 4, 25—31; Rev. 3, 7—11.

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59. Naboth's Vineyard.

1 Kings 21—22
2 Kings 9

Ahab had entirely fallen away from God. He was wholly steeped in the sin of gross idolatry. The consequence was that he wantonly set at naught the commandments of God. Indeed, the Bible says that he sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of God. 1 Kings 21, 25. He was such an abject slave of sin that, when his wife Jezebel, who even exceeded him in wickedness, incited him to some wicked deed, he fulfilled her every wish.

Ahab's Covetousness.

Naboth = "Fruits." A citizen of the town of Jezreel.

Jezreel — A city in the Valley of Jezreel; a boundary of the tribe of Issachar. Josh. 19, 18. There was a royal residence at Samaria (Maps 3 and 5), the capital, but Ahab had built a magnificent summer residence at Jezreel. The palace was inlaid with ivory. The king's gardens adjoined the vineyard of Naboth.

Give me thy vineyard — Ahab wished to convert the vineyard into a vegetable garden ("garden of herbs," 1 Kings 21, 2).

The Lord forbid it me — The children of Israel were forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Lev. 25, 23—28; Num. 36, 7) to sell the paternal inheritance permanently out of the family. Naboth was one of the very few in Ahab's kingdom who still feared the Lord.

Heavy — In a gloomy and sullen mood.

Displeased — He considered Naboth's refusal to sell him his vineyard an insult, an act of disrespect.

He laid him down, etc. — The fact that he could not

Ruins of Jezreel.

take the coveted vineyard by force, as all the people knew that Naboth had the law on his side, increased his ill-temper to such an extent that he acted like a spoiled child.

JEZEBEL.

I will give thee the vineyard — Jezebel's words plainly indicated that she would employ illegal means to obtain possession of that vineyard. (Ninth Commandment: "craftily seek . . . show of right.")

In Ahab's name — She forged the king's name by affixing the royal seal to the document. — Documents were never signed with pen and ink, but simply sealed with a signet on

which the owner's name was engraved. A little ink was rubbed upon the signet and the latter then pressed upon the parchment.

Elders — Representatives of the ten tribes dwelling in Jezreel.

Nobles — Other leading men of the city.

Two men — The Mosaic Law (Deut. 19, 15) required that every matter at court be established at the mouth of at least two witnesses.

Sons of Belial — (Belial = worthlessness.) Extremely wicked and profligate men, rascals, vile persons, who would stoop to any crime for money.

Blaspheme God and the king — A false witness, a lie, stated on oath. (Eighth and Second Commandments.)

Carry him out — Executions had to take place "without the camp" or city. Lev. 24, 13—16.

Stone him — According to Ex. 22, 28 a blasphemer was to be put to death. (Lesson 32.)

The men of his city did, etc. — The elders and nobles feared the queen more than God. (Cat., Qu. 15; Matt. 10, 28; Qu. 44; Acts 5, 29.) — Ahab and Jezebel, the elders and nobles, were murderers in the sight of God. (2 Sam. 11, 15: David.)

Take possession, etc. — Naboth either had no sons, or they, too, were executed with him. (Story of Achan, Josh. 7, 24—26.) In either case Ahab could claim the vineyard of the executed man as his property; such property fell to the king. 2 Sam. 9, 7; 16, 4. (Ninth Commandment: "show of right.")

God's Judgment.

Meet Ahab in the vineyard — Two proofs of God's omniscience (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 139, 1—4): 1) He knew what Ahab had done; 2) He knew where Ahab would be when Elijah would reach Jezreel. — Ahab had not seen Elijah since the execution of the prophets of Baal, about five years previous.

Killed . . . taken possession? — Ahab had committed two

great crimes: 1) murder, 2) robbery, taking possession of something that did not belong to him.

Thus saith the Lord — Punishments threatened: 1) Ahab was to die at the hands of another, and dogs — classed with the unclean animals in the Law of Moses and regarded by the Israelites with peculiar contempt — were to lick his, the king's, blood. 2) Jezebel was even to be devoured by scavenger dogs and thus not even receive a decent burial. This would make their names abominable in the eyes of the people.

Samaria.

Ramoth-gilead — A chief city in the tribe of Gad, east of the Jordan; given to the Levites and made a city of refuge. (Map 3.)

At a venture — At random, without aiming at any one in particular. — For fear of being singled out by the enemy if he entered the battle with his royal robes, Ahab had disguised himself. It was the Lord who directed that arrow at the king; His hour to punish him had come. (Cat., Qu. 104; Jer. 23, 23. 24: "Can any hide himself," etc.)

The blood ran . . . into the chariot — He did not die until evening. All this while his blood oozed forth from his wound

and ran into the chariot, and the dogs licked up his blood, as Elijah had foretold.

Buried the king in Samaria — (Map 7.) The city of Samaria was 30 miles north of Jerusalem and 6 miles northwest of Shechem and was situated near the center of a beautiful basin about 6 miles in diameter and surrounded by hills. It was built, and made the capital of the ten tribes, by Omri, father of Ahab. (Previous to this, Shechem seems to have been the capital and Tirzah the court residence in summer.) Samaria remained the capital of the ten tribes until they were carried into captivity. It was a seat of idolatrous worship. In the New Testament we hear of it again. Jesus spoke with a woman of Samaria at Jacob's Well, in consequence of which she and many people of the city came to faith in Him; and Philip the Evangelist preached the Gospel there after the stoning of Stephen and gathered a congregation of believers.

Jezebel's Punishment.

Jehu — A captain of the army. He had been anointed king of Israel by the Lord's command and chosen by Him as His instrument for exterminating the entire family of Ahab because of its atrocious sins. He had already killed King Joram (Jehoram), the son of Ahab, and Ahaziah, king of Judah, the wicked son-in-law of Ahab, and was now on his way to Jezreel to end Jezebel's wicked existence.

Painted her face, etc. — She tinged the eyelids and eyebrows with a fine black powder, moistened with oil or vinegar (the women's cosmetic in the Orient), which caused a small black line to appear around the edge and at a distance gave a heavy dark shade to the eyes. In addition, she encircled her head with a tire, an ornamental head-dress. She wanted to charm men with her beauty.

Throw her down . . . trade [trod] *her under foot* — The sin-hardened queen met a sudden, ignominious death and did not even receive a decent burial. Her flesh was eaten by dogs, and the bones were thrown on a dung-heap. — "Be not deceived; God is not mocked!" Gal. 6, 7.

Catechism: Second, Fifth, Eighth, and Ninth Commandments; Close of Commandments.

Hymns: 391, 9—12; 55; 379; 346, 5. 7.

Bible Readings: Is. 5, 8—30; Prov. 14, 30—35; Gal. 6, 7—10.

60. Elijah and Elisha.

There are two men in the Old Testament of whom the Bible tells us that they did not see death, but that they were taken to heaven alive. The first was Enoch, one of the patriarchs who lived before the Flood. "He was not; for God took him," we read Gen. 5, 24. The second one was Elijah, that extraordinarily zealous and faithful servant of the Lord.

The Walk to Jordan.

Take Elijah into heaven — With body and soul, without his seeing death. About 895 B. C. — The Lord wished to show Elijah a special favor because he had been such a faithful, zealous, and fearless preacher and witness at a time when well-nigh all Israel had forsaken Him.

By a whirlwind — Amid a grand display of His power through the force of nature. (See picture.)

Gilgal — Probably in the range of hills beyond Bethel. A school of the prophets was there. (Map 7.)

Tarry here — Elijah, very likely, preferred to be all alone when the Lord would translate him to heaven.

Bethel = "House of God." Also the seat of a school of prophets. Twelve miles north of Jerusalem. (Map 7.)

As the Lord liveth, etc. — He was so devoted and attached to his teacher that he wished to assure him with a solemn oath that he would not be parted from him. He had been Elijah's constant companion and servant (besides being his pupil) for about eight years.

The sons of the prophets — The theological students at the seminary (school of the prophets) at Bethel.

Knowest thou, etc. — Probably the Lord had revealed His intention to them directly.

From thy head — The teacher sat on an elevated seat, so that his feet were level with the heads of his pupils (who sat on the floor).

Jericho — Elijah wanted to make a farewell visit at the school of prophets also at this place. (Map 7.)

Jordan — Not far from this river Elijah's translation into heaven was to take place.

Elijah's Translation into Heaven.

Elijah took his mantle, etc. — Turning his mantle, or outer garment, made of sheepskin (the outward sign of his office), tightly round and round, so that it resembled a staff or rod, he struck the waters of the Jordan, with the miraculous result that they were divided. (Upon what other occasions did we hear of the waters' being divided?)

A double portion — According to Deut. 21, 17 the first-born son received "a double portion of all that he [the father] hath," which was called "the right of the first-born." Elisha being Elijah's first-born spiritual son, he made bold to ask a double portion of Elijah's spirit. He desired to do still more for the Lord than his spiritual father had done. Truly, a noble zeal!

A hard thing — Because it was a spiritual gift, which it was not in his power to bestow.

If thou see me — If God would permit him to see his spiritual father transported to heaven alive, he should rest assured that He had granted his petition.

Chariot of fire and horses of fire — The glorious host of heaven in the form of a royal chariot and a span of horses — a most brilliant escort.

Whirlwind — The air was set in great commotion by the sudden coming down of this heavenly chariot.

My father — Spiritual father.

Chariot of Israel — As an army protects a country against the enemy, so Elijah had been Israel's strong protector both by virtue of the Word of God which he had preached and the earnest prayers and supplications which he had continually sent to the Throne of Grace.

Where is the Lord God of Elijah? — Will He be with me as He was with Elijah?

The waters parted — The fact that God granted him power to perform the same miracle that Elijah had performed shortly before his ascension confirmed him as the successor of Elijah. The sons of the prophets at Jericho grasped this at once.

Sons of the prophets — Elisha, like Elijah, became the principal theological teacher and head (president) of the schools of prophets at Jericho, Ramah, Bethel, and Gilgal.

Bowed themselves to the ground before him — Showed him the honor and respect due him as their teacher. (Cat., Qu. 40: All those who are "placed over us in . . . school and church" we should honor according to the Fourth Commandment.)

ELISHA MOCKED.

Bethel — Not only a school of prophets had been established there, but it was also the seat of one of the golden calves set up by Jeroboam and hence a prominent center of idol-worship.

Little children — Most likely boys of the age of fifteen and over, children of idol-worshiping parents.

Mocked him — They knew Elisha, as he had been at Bethel with Elijah probably many a time. Most likely they had been instigated by their godless parents, worshipers of the golden calf at Bethel, to make sport of the great teacher and prophet.

Thou bald head — The words of mockery were directed against the physical defect mentioned, but the real purpose was to show their contempt for the divine truth which Elisha taught (at the school of prophets) and preached (throughout the country). (Cat., Qu. 42; Prov. 30, 17: "mocketh . . . despiseth.")

Cursed them in the name of the Lord — There is one case in which men may, yea, must pronounce a curse, revenge and punish some evil done, to wit, when they act in the capacity of God's representatives, when their office demands of them to call down God's wrath and punishment upon

individuals or a nation. Parents exercise this right when they punish their children; the local, state, or national government, when it gives thieves, murderers, etc., their due; a Christian congregation, when it excommunicates impenitent sinners. (Cf. the curse pronounced by Noah upon Canaan.)

Tare — A judgment of God, following, as it did, immediately upon the act of mocking the prophet. No doubt, it opened the eyes of some of the idol-worshiping people roundabout.

THE FLOWING OIL.

Cried — Implored Elisha to help her.

A certain woman — Widow of a departed prophet.

Creditor — From whom her dead husband had borrowed some money.

Bondmen — Take them from her in payment of the debt and make them his slaves.

Not a few — God never gives sparingly, but bountifully.

So she went — She asked no questions, but in simple faith did what she had been told to do.

The oil stayed — It ceased to flow.

Man of God — Elisha.

Of the rest — She had enough to provide for her children.

CATECHISM: Third Article ("life everlasting"); Fourth Commandment (Cat., Qu. 42); First Article ("richly and daily provides me").

HYMNS: 233, 3—7; 234; 559. — 391, 5; 392, 4. — 394, 1.

BIBLE READINGS: Mal. 4; Matt. 11, 7–15; Heb. 11, 32—40; Ps. 27, 7—14.

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61. Naaman and Elisha. 2 Kings 5

Already in the days of the Old Testament the Lord plainly showed at various times that He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He had chosen the children of Israel to be His peculiar people

and had revealed to them particularly His holy Word, both Law and Gospel. But He gave the heathen sufficient opportunity to seek and find Him. To-day we shall hear of a respected and powerful man of a heathen nation who received special favors of the Lord and who came to the knowledge of the true God.

Naaman's Leprosy.

Naaman . . . captain—Commander-in-chief of the Syrian army ("host"). Syria (Map 4) was a powerful nation. David had conquered the Syrians, but after the death of Solomon they had regained their former power. They often waged war against Israel.

A great man — Very influential, probably next in authority to the king.

And honorable— Benhadad, his king, and the people highly respected him.

He was a leper — Naaman's leprosy, it seems, was the white-skin leprosy. "The whole body turns to a disagreeable white color and has a scaly white texture. It greatly disfigures its unfortunate victims by eating away a portion of the nose or cheek or lip, or by leaving an unsightly scab. But the disease does not affect general health or the power of getting a livelihood." The Mosaic law compelled lepers to dwell apart; but the Syrians did not regard leprosy with such horror. Naaman occupied his high position as before.

The Syrians had gone out, etc. — Troops of Syrians had entered the territory of Israel upon marauding expeditions and, while seizing plunder, had taken with them also an Israelitish maid, who became the house-slave of Naaman's wife.

The prophet . . . would recover him of his leprosy — This little girl was a missionary; she spoke to her mistress of the living God, of His prophet Elisha, and of the miracles the latter had performed in the name of God; and she was sure he would be able to cure Naaman. — Note 1) this little maid's *faith,* 2) the fruit of faith, *love* — love even of her enemies. — (Cat., Qu. 235: God's children desire to see

His kingdom come to all those still without the Gospel; Matt. 9, 38.)

I will send a letter, etc. — The king of Syria sent a letter of introduction and appeal to the king of Israel in Naaman's behalf.

Ten talents of silver — Almost $20,000.

Six thousand pieces of gold — About $40,000. Not coined money, but ingots, or bars, of gold and silver.

Ten changes of raiment — Costly robes, suitable for festive occasions. — To come before a prince or king without a gift when a favor was asked was considered inexcusable rudeness.

The king of Israel said, . . . Am I God, etc. — The wicked King Jehoram, son of Jezebel, lived in perpetual fear of the powerful king of Syria; and, on reading his letter, the suspicion was aroused within him that he would be only too ready to pick a quarrel with him if his request to heal his leprous general were not complied with, and thus find a pretext for declaring war against him.

He rent his clothes — As an expression of grief and fear.

Naaman Healed.

Elisha sent to the king — Elisha seems to have lived in Samaria at this time, and as the coming of the powerful prince of Syria and his strange request had caused quite a commotion, the prophet, too, soon heard of it. The words, "Wherefore," etc., were a rebuke administered to the king for not sending Naaman to the prophet of God.

With his horses and chariot — Also his pompous retinue — to show how great a man he was.

Stood at the door — Expecting Elisha to come out and show him the reverence his rank and station called for in his own country, and humbly to ask him what was his pleasure.

Sent a messenger (Gehazi) — The first disappointment!

Go and wash, etc. — The second disappointment! Naaman considered it an insult to be treated thus by a humble subject of Jehoram, though a prophet. No deference, no

obeisance, — and such a preposterous demand or suggestion! — Elisha wished the great general to realize that it was by the power of God Almighty that the cure would be wrought, not by human means.

Strike his hand over the place — According to the custom of the magicians.

Abana and Pharpar — (Map 6.) Both of these rivers had the clearest water possible. The Abana "flowed pure as crystal from the snowy Lebanon, through the very streets of Damascus, amidst famous wide gardens." (*Geikie.*) Jordan on the other hand, was an unattractive stream. — Damascus, 133 miles northeast of Jerusalem, called "the oldest city of the world," the "Pearl of the East," was famed for its swords (Damascus blades) and its silks (damasks).

My father — Naaman seems to have been loved and respected by his servants. (Fourth Commandment: "parents and masters.") They try to soothe their master's rage.

Some great thing — Something difficult to carry out, perhaps a fatiguing pilgrimage.

How much rather — How much more willing ought he to be to follow the prophet's directions when so little was demanded!

Then went he down — The country round about Jordan lies lower than Samaria. The Jordan was about 30 miles from Samaria.

Seven times — He obeyed the word of the Lord's prophet; he obeyed to the letter. God's Holy Spirit had wrought a change in him. (Cat., Qu. 176. 175. Hymn 344, 3.)

He was clean — The cure was perfect, as promised by Elisha. Not the waters of Jordan had effected the cure, but the word of God. (This cleansing was a type of the New Testament Baptism, which cleanses from the leprosy of sin.)

No God . . . but in Israel — He had been converted to faith in the true God.

A blessing — A liberal present. (We heard how much he took with him when he left Syria.) Gratitude is a fine virtue; flows from love of neighbor. (Cat., Qu. 36; Matt. 7, 12.)

As the Lord liveth, . . . none — The gifts of God can neither be purchased nor paid for with money. Acts 8, 20. — Because it was necessary to attest this important truth as strongly as possible, the prophet used an oath. (Cat., Qu. 25.)

Gehazi's Unfaithfulness and Punishment.

Take somewhat [something] *of him* — The love of money ruled the heart of Gehazi, and this sin is "the root of all evil." 1 Tim. 6, 10. (Ninth Commandment.) — He ran after Naaman without telling his master one word about it.

My master hath sent me — His covetousness tempts him to tell a lie. (Eighth Commandment.)

Young men of the sons of the prophets — Poor students from one of the schools of prophets.

A talent of silver — About $2,000.

Change of garments — Ready-to-wear garments which princes were wont to make presents of to friends, etc., as a mark of distinction, an act of favor, or a token of appreciation. They had been intended for the king of Israel or "the prophet in Samaria."

The tower — The hill where Elisha dwelt.

Stowed them — Hid them in a safe place.

Stood before his master — Wholly unconcerned, as though nothing had happened. A consummate hypocrite!

Whence comest thou? — The Lord had revealed to His prophet what his servant had done. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ps. 139, 1—4.)

Thy servant went nowhither (nowhere) — He impudently heaped one lie upon the other. (Cat., Qu. 115; John 8, 44: the devil the father of lies.)

Went not mine heart with thee? — In a miraculous way he had been permitted to see what Gehazi had done.

The leprosy of Naaman, etc. — For his threefold sin of covetousness, lying, and obtaining his neighbor's money and goods under false pretenses, with a show of right (Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Commandments), he would be severely punished, and even his descendants would have to bear the iniquity of their father and ancestor. ("Forever," as at

various places in the Bible, here means a long time. Comp. Close of the Commandments: "unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.") .

He went out, etc. — He turned a leper at once. (Close of Commandments: "Therefore we should fear His wrath," etc.)

Catechism: Baptism, "How can water do such great things?" Commandments 7—9.

Hymns: 400, 5—7; 346, 5.

Bible Readings: Luke 17, 11—19; 1 Tim. 6, 6—10.

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62. The Prophet Jonah. Jonah 1-4

In our last lesson we heard of a man from a heathen nation, Naaman, who was brought to the knowledge of the God of Israel. To-day's lesson will tell us of the inhabitants of a large, populous city who were called to repentance by a prophet of the Lord. Already in the days of the Old Testament the Lord showed that He "wills all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. Sad to say, however, the prophet at first was not willing to deliver the saving message to those blind heathen.

Jonah's Flight.

The word of the Lord came unto Jonah — Jonah was called to be a prophet of the Lord about eighty years after Elisha, during the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14, 25), the most powerful of all the kings of Israel, about 800 years before the birth of Christ. He was a citizen of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun, three miles north of Nazareth. (Map 6.) He seems to have been Jeroboam's court-preacher.

Go to Nineveh — Nineveh (built by Asshur, Gen. 10, 11), the capital of Assyria, was situated on the river Tigris, 500 miles northeast of Jerusalem. (Map 4.) It was "an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (a circumference of 60 miles). It was the London or New York of the ancient world, with immense walls, heathen temples, and magnificent

palaces, and numbered 600,000 inhabitants. The walls were one hundred feet high and broad enough for three chariots to be driven abreast. "The work of archeologists along the Tigris has established beyond question the fact that it took three days to make the round of Nineveh's great market-places; for there were four sections, or quarters, of the city connected by excellent highways." (Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, in *Junior Bible Student.*) In 606 B. C. the city was destroyed by the Medes and Babylonians. Nah. 3; Zeph. 2, 13—15.

Their wickedness is come up before Me — Their wickedness was so great that it cried to heaven, like the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. 18, 20. 21. Jonah was to "cry against" their atrocious sins and call them to repentance.

Flee from the presence of the Lord — Strange that the prophet should have entertained the idea, even for a moment, of being able to get out of the reach of the omnipresent and almighty God. Jer. 23, 23. 24; Ps. 139, 1—4. — Like many of his people, Jonah was loath to see the grace of God extended to the heathen. (Want of love of his fellow-men commanded in the Second Table of the Ten Commandments. Cat., Qu. 36. 37.)

Joppa — A seaport 35 miles northwest of Jerusalem. (Map 3.)

Tarshish — Most likely Tartessus, in Spain, in those days "the end of the world." (Map 1.)

Like [likely] *to be broken* — Shipwreck was imminent. This tempest was a warning meant for the disobedient prophet; but he did not heed it.

Every man unto his god — The sailors were men of different nationalities, and each prayed to the idol of his nation.

Jonah . . . was fast asleep — He on whose account the Lord had sent this furious gale was sleeping in the "sides" (hold) of the ship. He had drowned the voice of his conscience. (First Commandment: no fear of God.)

Call upon thy God — Incensed at the sleeping Hebrew, the "ship-master" (captain) demanded that he pray to the God of his nation, hoping in his heathenish way ("if so be")

that, after all the other gods had failed in stilling the tempest, He might possibly help them in their distress.

Let us cast lots — A common method of determining guilt. Even the blind heathen know that there is One who punishes sin. (Cat., Qu. 8; Rom. 2, 14. 15.)

The lot fell upon Jonah — The disposing of the lot was of the Lord (Prov. 16, 33), because He wanted to bring His wayward prophet to his senses.

I am a Hebrew — The nations surrounding the Holy Land were wont to call the people of God after their remote ancestor Eber. Gen. 10, 24.

I fear the Lord — Now Jonah finally professed his faith, and he also confessed that the raging tempest had been sent by his God, the true God, because he had disobeyed Him. (Conscience awakened.)

Which hath made the sea and the dry land — You heathen, Jonah wished to say, who worship many gods, believe that one god has made the dry land, another the sea, etc.; but I am telling you of the true and only God, who is the Creator of *all* things.

What shall we do unto thee? — They were anxious to appease the wrath of the Lord of heaven and earth by making the disobedient prophet suffer the well-merited punishment, and they expected him to tell them by what kind of punishment his sin could be expiated.

Cast me forth into the sea — Jonah, repentant at last, was willing to lose his life in order to save that of his fellow-passengers. If he, the object of God's wrath, were no longer aboard ship, then, he knew, the gale would subside.

Jonah Cast into the Sea.

They took up Jonah, etc. — After another vain attempt to row ashore, being loath to follow Jonah's suggestion, and beseeching the Lord not to hold them accountable if they did so, they threw the prophet overboard.

The men feared the Lord exceedingly — Though it is doubtful whether those heathen mariners were sincere in their worship of the true God, they at least had to admit that

the living God, of whom Jonah had told them, had revealed Himself to them through this miracle. See Acts 14, 17; 17, 27. 28. (Cat., Qu. 104; Rom. 1, 19. 20. Natural knowledge of God.)

A great fish — The word used here in the Hebrew means sea-monster. Matt. 12, 40 the name of the animal which swallowed Jonah is there translated "whale"; however, also there the Greek word simply signifies a monster of the deep. — There are sea-monsters in the Mediterranean capable of swallowing a man or even a horse. They have an air-chamber, extending from the chin to the chest, which is as large as an ordinary bedroom, and with an entrance from the large windpipe large enough to admit any man. The mother of these monsters of the deep shelters her young in these air-chambers during a heavy tempest. — The Lord "prepared" this great fish to swallow Jonah; He has dominion over all the works of His hands, consequently also over "the fish of the sea and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." Ps. 8, 6. 8. This "great fish," then, had to do the Lord's bidding when He wanted him to come to that spot where the prophet's body sank down into the briny deep.

Three days and three nights — Through a miracle of the Lord, Jonah was kept alive in this more than strange "habitation." — Here, where his soul "fainted within him," and he felt as though he had been "cast out of the sight" of the Lord, he prayed with a contrite heart to Him who was able to deliver him.

Vomited out Jonah — Probably on the shore of Joppa, where he had gone aboard ship.

Nineveh's Repentance.

The preaching that I bid thee — Jonah must not only be willing to go to that heathen city; what is more, he dare not proclaim a message of his own, but he must preach only what the Lord had told him to say. (First Petition: "Word of God . . . in its truth and purity.")

Three days' journey — A day's journey is about 20 miles; consequently the circumference of Nineveh was about 60 miles.

Yet forty days, etc. — With holy courage he proclaimed to the extremely wicked people of that great and proud city the wrath of the holy God because of their heinous sins and threatened its sudden destruction like Sodom and Gomorrah ("overthrown").

Fast . . . sackcloth . . . ashes — The inhabitants of Nineveh, including the king, humbled themselves and repented (Christ, too, uses the word "repent," Matt. 12, 41; Luke 11, 32). The fast was a sign of their humiliation and repentance; putting on sackcloth (a coarse cloth, made of goat's-hair) signified sorrow and mourning; sitting in ashes indicated a high degree of humiliation and sorrow. The unexampled effect of Jonah's powerful call to repentance is shown best by what is said of the deep humiliation of that mighty king. (Cat., Qu. 91; Rom. 3, 20. The Law of God a mirror. Qu. 100; Rom. 1, 16. The Gospel a "power of God," etc.)

Nor beast — "The very lowing of the cattle and the bleating of the sheep in their distress were considered appeals for mercy."

Turn away from His fierce anger — The king and his people took refuge to the mercy of God — faith. (Repentance comprises two things: 1) being truly sorry for having transgressed God's commandments; 2) putting one's trust in the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Cat: "What Is Confession?" Apply to repentance of Ninevites.)

God saw that they turned, etc. — He not only saw that the people mended their evil ways, but He beheld the change of their hearts.

He repented of the evil — He did not "change His mind"; He did what He has promised all who sincerely repent — He forgave their sins and did not punish them as they deserved. (See p. 227: "It repenteth Me.")

Jonah's Displeasure.

It displeased Jonah exceedingly — Strange indeed! He had more regard for his reputation as a prophet (the Ninevites might call him a lying prophet because his prediction did not come true) than for the salvation of a million people.

Was not this my saying, etc. — He had been loath to go to Nineveh because he did not desire these heathen to come to the knowledge of God! (Sad lack of love of fellow-man. Sum of Second Table.)

I knew that Thou art a gracious God, etc. — (As the Lord had said of Himself, Ex. 34, 6. 7. Cat., Qu. 104.) He craved this divine grace and mercy for himself, but did not like to see it extended to the heathen nations. Heaven open only for chosen people!

Sat on the east side — Very likely on a hill overlooking the city.

Made him a booth — A hastily constructed shelter of branches and leaves. Probably he thought God would delay the destruction of the city only for a short time.

Jonah and the Gourd.

God prepared a gourd — A castor-oil plant, which grows quickly and has large leaves, making excellent shade from the hot sun.

God prepared a worm — Jonah's happy feeling was not to last long. The Lord wanted to teach him a much-needed lesson.

God prepared a vehement east wind — "We note in connection with Jonah's experience that 'God had *prepared* a great fish,' 'God *prepared* a gourd,' 'God *prepared* a worm,' and 'God *prepared* a vehement east wind' — all for the disciplining of the prophet."

He fainted — He was overcome by the heat.

I do well to be angry — A most impertinent answer! We must admire the long-suffering of God. (Cat., Qu. 104; Ex. 34, 6. 7: "long-suffering.")

Pity on the gourd — He was sorry to see that lusty plant perish — for his own sake! A case of murmuring against God. (Cat., Qu. 16; Ps. 42, 11: "disquieted.")

Should not I spare Nineveh? — Jonah worried about a lifeless plant, while the perishing souls of the great city were nothing to him!

That cannot discern, etc. — Little children, infants — 120,000!

Also much cattle — While the animals have no souls, yet the destruction even of numberless head of cattle, to which the Lord had given life, and which would have perished with the 600,000 souls if He had not spared the city, ought to have given the whimsical, unreasonable prophet greater concern than the withering of the gourd. — Jonah (similarly to Job) now humbly submitted to the earnest reproof of God, and the Lord forgave his waywardness. (Cat., Qu. 315.) "Moreover, the tidings which Jonah was able to bring back to his countrymen were a most emphatic call to repentance, as Jesus brings out in His reference to the repentance of the Ninevites." (*Pop. Com.*)

Catechism: God's omnipresence, Qu. 104. Forgiveness of sins, Third Article; Fifth Petition ("not look upon our sins").

Hymns: 312, 2. 3; 426, 1; 415, 5; 506, 3. 4; 381, 2; 414, 4.

Bible Readings: Ezek. 18, 21—32; Matt. 12, 38—42; Luke 15, 1—10.

2 Kings 17-20 2 Chron 29

63. Overthrow of the Kingdom of Israel. — Hezekiah.

In our last lesson we heard of blind and ignorant heathen who turned from their evil ways when a preacher of repentance was sent to them by the Lord Jehovah, so that He was moved with compassion toward them and did not carry out His threat spoken by the mouth of His prophet. To-day's lesson tells us a story of a long-continued, obstinate refusal to listen to the voice of God and His prophets, not on the part of such as did not know the true God, but by the chosen people of God, the ten tribes of Israel, who had always heard His Word and had received untold blessings. The consequence was that they had to smart under the rod of a most severe divine punishment, and as a distinct nation they were wiped off from the face of the earth. — Besides this gloomy picture, however, we shall see one that will fill our hearts with joy.

Israel's Sins.

Walked in the statutes of the heathen — The cause of Israel's downfall and overthrow was wilful and persistent sinning.

1) *They despised the "statutes,"* the laws and ordinances, *of God,* their Lord and Benefactor, and, instead, chose the soul-destroying delusions of the blind heathen, which daily led them farther away from holiness and righteousness.

2) *They served idols* — They grossly violated God's First Commandment. a) *They made "two* [golden] *calves,"* set up by Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, one at Dan, the chief city of the northern district, the other at Bethel, twelve miles north of Jerusalem, to prevent the ten tribes from worshiping at Jerusalem, where the Lord's Temple was. b) *They made "a grove,"* images, or stone pillars, of heathen goddesses, with whose worship shameful, indecent practises were connected. These images were generally placed in groves, where the lewd acts of the "worshipers" could be hidden from public view. c) *They "worshiped all the host of heaven"* — sun, moon, and the stars. Incense was burned to them; the people prayed to them. The worship of the sun-god of the Phenicians, Baal, is especially mentioned. d) *They "caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire."* Another form of idol-worship. Parents would sacrifice their children to the idol Moloch (Molech), a brazen image, whose body and arms were hollow. A furious fire was kindled within it, and when the outstretched arms had become red-hot, the children would be thrown into them and thus burned alive. Solomon already erected an altar for this abomination on what was hence called the Mount of Offense; and in succeeding centuries the Israelites burned children to this idol in the Valley of Hinnom. Ps. 106, 38; Jer. 7, 31; 19, 4. 5; Ezek. 16, 21; 23, 37. 39.

3) *They used divination and enchantments* — Divination = foretelling future events with the aid of Satan; enchantments = magic spells and charms produced by magicians. (All these abominations in the sight of the holy God were sins against the First and Second Commandments.)

4) *They left all the commandments of the Lord, their God.* Since they did not fear and love God (First Commandment), all the other commandments of the Decalog were impudently disregarded by them. (Natural consequence.)

5) *They sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord.* They had completely become slaves of sin and Satan. (Sixth Petition: "great shame and vice.")

6) *They did not heed the warnings of God's holy prophets.* "Yet the Lord testified. . . . Notwithstanding they would not hear." Like Pharaoh they hardened their hearts.

To provoke Him to anger — He is "not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness." Ps. 5, 4. The Holy One cannot but hate sin and must punish all impenitent transgressors of His commandments. (Close of Commandments.) "Anger" = holy indignation over sin.

Israel Led into Captivity.

Very angry — His long-suffering was now at an end. "The mills of God grind slowly," etc.

Removed them out of His sight — A human father will first admonish, reprove, and chastise his disobedient son; however, if he remains stubborn and refractory, he will finally expel him from his home and thus banish him from his sight. This last punishment, exile, and, worst of all, with no promise of return, now awaited the ten tribes.

Hoshea — The last of the kings of Israel. By making an alliance with Egypt, he tried to throw off the Assyrian yoke. Thus he provoked the Assyrian king to besiege Samaria, the capital of the ten tribes.

Shalmaneser — King of Assyria 727—722 B. C. (The capital city was Nineveh. Map 4.) While he besieged Samaria, a rebellion broke out in Assyria, and he was deposed. God used him as His chastening rod to punish Israel.

Carried Israel away into Assyria — The ten tribes were scattered throughout the country of their captivity and never returned in greater bodies to the land of their ancestors. The Assyrian king sent heathen colonists from his country

to settle the former Northern Kingdom, and they and the remnants of the ten tribes living within the boundaries of their former kingdom intermarried. From that time on to the days of Christ the Samaritans, as this mixed race was called, tried to "serve two masters": "they feared the Lord" (they pretended to do so) *"and* served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence." 2 Kings 17, 33. See v. 34: "They feared *not* the Lord," not from their hearts. At the time of the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, almost two hundred years after the ten tribes had been led into captivity, the Samaritans became the allies of the enemies of the Jews, who wanted to frustrate the building of the second Temple. From that time on the Jews and the Samaritans were bitter enemies. But in the days of the apostles the Samaritans accepted the Gospel. Acts 8.

The Excellent Reign of King Hezekiah.

Hezekiah, king of Judah — Meaning of name: "Strength of Jehovah." He was the thirteenth king after David. Time of his reign, 726—697 B. C.

Did that which was right — Though the son of wicked King Ahaz, the most wicked of all the kings of Judah, he walked in the ways of the Lord. He was one of the three best kings of Judah. 1) *"He opened again the doors of the house of the Lord"* which his royal predecessors had closed because they had abandoned themselves entirely to the worship of idols. He had the priests and the Levites *"sanctify"* the Temple by commanding them to remove from it the idols, idol-shrines, and other things that did not belong in the Sanctuary of the Lord and reintroducing the true worship. 2) He called upon all the people of his kingdom to renounce the idols, to pray to the true and living God, and to assemble in His Temple (*"sent to all Israel and Judah that they should turn again,"* etc.).

And there assembled at Jerusalem, etc. — Hezekiah's call to repentance was not in vain. 1) A great multitude met at the Temple to worship and sacrifice. 2) They destroyed

the altars that had been erected to idols. (The Brook Kidron ["black brook"], into which they were cast, is a small stream running hard by the walls of Jerusalem and emptying its waters into the Dead Sea.) 3) For the first time since the reign of Solomon the people celebrated the Passover Festival in the proper manner. — Why was it called the Feast of Unleavened Bread? (See Lesson 27.)

Jerusalem Besieged.

Sennacherib — Grandson of Shalmaneser, who, nine years before, had besieged Samaria. After he had taken all "the fenced cities of Judah," all the towns that were fortified with walls, he laid siege to Jerusalem, 713 B. C.

Rabshakeh — The chief butler, or cup-bearer, of the Assyrian king, also commander of his body-guard; a mighty prince.

Went up — Jerusalem was situated on a high plateau.

Make your trust in the Lord — It was known among the heathen that, whenever the people trusted in the Lord, they were victorious in battle. Rabshakeh knew that, if they would cast away this trust, they would soon fall into the hands of the Assyrian king; for he had a very large and well-equipped army.

The Lord will surely deliver us — Pious Hezekiah trusted in the Lord with all his heart. (Cat., Qu. 14ff.; Prov. 3, 5.)

Any of the gods of the nations — A blasphemous utterance against the living God, who had "not left Himself without witness" (Acts 14, 17), so that the heathen might very well have known, if they had not hardened their hearts, that He was more powerful than they and their lifeless idols. (Cat., Qu. 22.) — Rabshakeh's words remind us of haughty Pharaoh.

When King Hezekiah heard it, etc. — Hezekiah, in this great distress, acted as a child of God should. 1) He was shocked and grieved at hearing such blasphemous boasting and therefore "rent his clothes" (his outer garments). 2) He humbled himself ("sackcloth") before God because of his and his people's sins. (Cat., Confession and Fifth Petition.)

3) "He went into the house of the Lord" a) to confess his and his people's sins and b) in firm confidence to beseech the Lord for His almighty help. (Cat., Qu. 28.) 4) He asked God's prophet for advice how to act in this most distressful situation. — And because he took the proper, God-pleasing steps, the Lord sent him a speedy and wonderful deliverance.

He sent to Isaiah — Isaiah ("Jehovah's salvation") is the greatest of the prophets whom the Lord inspired to record the contents of their messages to the people, especially their prophecies — "the Evangelist of the Old Testament." His book contains more and clearer Messianic prophecies than all the other prophetic writings combined. The pearl and gem of all his prophecies is chapter 53, in which he pictures the suffering of the Redeemer. — He was the son of Amoz and "seems to have descended from a noble family, according to Jewish tradition a side-line of the reigning family of David." (*Pop. Com.*) He began his prophetic career under King Uzziah and continued it under Kings Ahaz and Hezekiah. He wore a hair-cloth dress. Is. 20, 2 ("sackcloth"). He was held in high esteem by the faithful of those days of ever-growing defection, especially by King Hezekiah. He is said to have suffered a martyr's death. A Jewish tradition has it that during the reign of the godless King Manasseh, at the age of ninety, he was sawed asunder in a hollow carob-tree.

Thus saith the Lord, etc. — The Lord's twofold comfort: 1) Sennacherib shall not harm the city nor its inhabitants in the least: a) I, the Lord, will not permit his army to enter the Holy City; b) what is more, he will not even have an opportunity to shoot an arrow into it; c) nor will he get near enough to dig trenches preparatory to really besieging it. 2) "I will defend the city"; I, the Almighty, will fight against the enemy!

Sennacherib's Army Destroyed.

That night — "While they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Cat., Qu. 208; Is. 65, 24.)

The Angel of the Lord — "The Son of God, who bears

this name throughout the Old Testament." (*Pop. Com.*) He granted His people a mighty deliverance: 185,000 soldiers killed in one night! (Cat., Qu. 28; Ps. 50, 15: "I will deliver thee." Qu. 209; Matt. 7, 7. 8; Ps. 145,18.19.)

When they arose — Those of the army who had been spared.

They were all dead corpses — All their former comrades, now lying dead on the camping-ground.

Sennacherib . . . departed — Quickly humiliated; unable to make good his blasphemous threat. He was covered with shame when he came back to his people with a despicably small army — his proud purpose miserably defeated!

House of his god — The temple of his idol Nisroch, represented in the Assyrian tablets by a human form with the wings and the head of an eagle.

His sons smote him — An end only too well deserved by one who had uttered such blasphemies against the Lord. (Blaspheming Pharaoh drowned in the Red Sea. Cat., Qu. 22; Gal. 6, 7.)

Hezekiah's Life Lengthened.

In those days — Probably soon after the wonderful deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib and his powerful army.

Sick unto death — Humanly speaking, there was no hope of recovery.

Set thine house in order — He was to make his last will and testament, make the necessary provisions for his successor, and prepare for a blessed departure from this world. Hezekiah was thirty-nine years old at the time.

Turned his face to the wall — With his face turned away from those standing at his bedside, he could all the better be alone with his God, be all the more fervent in prayer.

Walked before Thee in truth — With a sincere heart, without hypocrisy, he had served the Lord and had endeavored to lead backsliding Israel back to its God.

With a perfect heart — Not an expression of self-righteousness. What he meant to say was: I have not served two masters — Thee, O God, and sin, but only Thee.

Middle court — "The middle city, Mount Zion, where the royal palace was situated." (*Pop. Com.*)

I have heard thine prayers . . . seen thy tears — Gracious omnipresence and omniscience of God. (Cat., Qu. 104.)

I will heal thee — "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Ex. 15, 26. God can and will give us what we pray for if it tends to His glory and our welfare. (Cat., Qu. 211.)

Lump of figs — Ordinarily this plaster of figs, as it were, would not have healed the king. God performed a miracle here; but it pleased Him to use also an external means. (Cf. Naaman's bathing in the waters of Jordan, the putting of clay on the eyes of the man born blind on the part of Jesus, etc.)

Catechism: Close of Commandments: "God threatens to punish," etc. First Commandment: "trust Him," etc. Qu. 104; Ps. 145, 9.

Hymns: 421; 515, 1. 2; 23, 7; 33, 8; 60, 4. 5; 292, 10. 11. 14—18; 544, 3. 4.

Bible Readings: Hos. 5, 1—6; Amos 8; Ps. 46; Dan. 9, 3—19; Micah 6, 6—9.

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2 Kings 23-25 Jer. 34-3
2 Chron 36

64. The Babylonian Captivity.

The ten tribes had to feel the wrath of God because they wantonly and stubbornly sinned against Him and refused to listen to His loyal messengers, the prophets, who called them to repentance. The Kingdom of Israel was entirely overthrown, and the people were taken into captivity, never to return to their homeland as a nation. The Kingdom of Judah was spared; for at that time, under the reign of the pious King Hezekiah, there were still quite a number in Judah who feared the Lord. But the kings who succeeded Hezekiah upon the throne of Judah, with the exception of Josiah, were exceedingly wicked men, and the people followed the example of their royal masters. The consequence was that they were punished similarly to their brethren of

the ten tribes, with the exception, however, that after seventy years the men of Judah were permitted to resettle in the Holy Land. Thus their family tree was preserved. This was done by God's special providence; for out of Judah was to come the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

The Wicked Kings.

Jehoahaz — The fourth son of the God-fearing King Josiah. He became king eighty-eight years after the death of Hezekiah, 610 B. C. He did not walk in the footsteps of his father Josiah.

Condemned the land — The Egyptian King Necho punished Jehoahaz and his people by compelling them to pay a fine of 100 talents of silver and one talent of gold — over $200,000.

Jehoiakim — The name given him by King Necho, who deposed Jehoahaz and set him, the oldest son of Josiah, upon the throne of the Kingdom of Judah. (His original name was Eliakim.) Besides leading an ungodly life, he persecuted the prophets, especially Jeremiah, and did not even shrink from cutting a roll of prophecies written by Jeremiah, at the command of God, with a penknife and casting it into the fire. Because of his heinous wickedness, God had Jeremiah prophesy of him that he would "be buried with the burial of an ass." Jer. 22, 19.

Nebuchadnezzar = "May Nebo [an Assyrian idol] protect the crown!" The founder of the Babylonish monarchy and one of the greatest rulers of history. He was the scourge God had chosen to punish His obstinately wicked people. Four times he invaded Palestine and besieged Jerusalem.

Babylon — (Map 4.) Capital of the Chaldean and Babylonian empires, situated on both banks of the Euphrates River, about 200 miles above its junction with the Tigris. Its circuit was about 56 miles; area, about 200 square miles. The walls, according to Herodotus, were 335 feet high and 75 feet broad, with 100 gates of brass. The river within the city was spanned by draw-bridges. The Hanging Gardens, covering 3½ acres, 75 feet high, were one of the seven

wonders of the world. The Bible calls Babylon "the glory of kingdoms," "the praise of the whole earth." Its entire desolation was frequently foretold by the prophets, and the prophecy that after its destruction it should "never [again] be inhabited, . . . wild beasts of the desert shall lie there," was literally fulfilled.

Jehoiachin — Son of Jehoiakim. He was only eighteen years old when he succeeded to the throne of his father and reigned but three months and ten days. For thirty-seven years he was a captive in Babylon, when he was liberated and occupied an honorable position at the Babylonian royal court.

Goodly vessels — The golden and silver vessels used at the Temple-worship. God's holy name was dishonored and profaned and the Temple desecrated, and therefore the Lord permitted their being removed from His Sanctuary. (Second and Third Commandments.)

Zedekiah — The last king of Judah, another son of Josiah. Like Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, he was a vassal, or tributary, king, being subject to Nebuchadnezzar. In the ninth year of his reign he rebelled against his liege lord, and two years later Jerusalem was taken.

Humbled not himself — Though God sent a great preacher of repentance, Jeremiah, to him, he would not listen to the voice of the Lord, but hardened his heart.

Jeremiah — One of the four major prophets. He was of the tribe of Benjamin and was born at Anathoth. Called by the Lord to be His prophet when he was still young, for which reason he at first wished to decline the call, he faithfully served the Lord and his people for forty-two years. His task was a most arduous one, as the Lord sent him to tell the king and the people that He would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple and have them taken into captivity, in which they would remain for seventy years, while the false prophets, of whom there were a great many, called Jeremiah a deceiver and liar and promised good things to a backsliding people. He was persecuted and ill-treated by the last kings of Judah and the mighty of the realm and hated by the

people, barely escaping with his life. But the Lord protected him, and when Jerusalem was destroyed, Nebuchadnezzar permitted him to stay in Judea. The Jews, however, who remained in the Holy Land after the destruction of Jerusalem later took him to Egypt, where he is supposed to have died, probably as a martyr. His Book of Lamentations, for the greater part, gives a vivid portrayal of the awful fate that befell Jerusalem and Judea. — His chief book contains also some beautiful Messianic prophecies, and he predicted the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity.

Swear by God — Zedekiah violated his oath by rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." (Cat., Qu. 17. 25.)

The Captivity Foretold.

I will give, etc. — God's prophet told the people that, though the king of Babylon would destroy Jerusalem, he would be merely His instrument through which *He* would punish them for their sins. (Close of Commandments.)

Judah Overthrown.

Pitched against it — Began his siege of Jerusalem, 588 B. C.

Famine prevailed — The famine was so great that women in despair killed and ate their own children! Lam. 4, 10. Moses had prophesied to his people that this very thing would come to pass if they would forsake the Lord, their God. Deut. 28, 53. (Cat., Qu. 83: "fear His *wrath.*")

Men of war — Able-bodied men, soldiers.

Fled by night — Contrary to the advice of Jeremiah, who had promised the king in the name of the Lord that, if he and the people of Jerusalem would remain in the city and peacefully surrender to the king of Babylon, no harm would come to him and the city would not be destroyed. But in the hearts of the king of Judah and his people there was not a particle of trust in the Lord; they were steeped in unbelief and sin. (Cat., Qu. 15; Jer. 17, 5.) — They learned to their sorrow that God's prophet had not threatened them

in vain if they would spurn even this last gracious offer of God.

Chaldees — Generally called Chaldeans, the original inhabitants of Babylonia, although long before the days of the Babylonian Empire they had ceased to be a distinct race and had been merged with the people of Assyrian descent who had settled in Babylonia.

Plains of Jericho — Very fertile plains near the river Jordan, about twelve miles from Jerusalem, where the army probably took a short rest to get a fresh supply of water from the large spring known as the "Fountain of Elisha."

Brought him up to the king of Babylon — Who was then at Riblath, about 150 miles north of Jerusalem. Zedekiah received a fourfold punishment: 1) His sons were killed before his very eyes — a heartrending sight for the father; 2) then he was cruelly deprived of his eyesight (probably by means of a red-hot silver dagger, a common mode of punishment with Orientals); 3) he was made to feel the shame and misery of being a prisoner of war; 4) he was sent into captivity — into slavery. Jeremiah had prophesied to him that, unless he would listen to the voice of God, he would be sent to Babylon, yet never see that city — he entered it a blind man! "Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all!"

Burned the house of the Lord — Which the Jews, in their blindness, thought would never come to pass, though predicted by God's prophets. The Temple had been most shamefully desecrated by idolatry and wanton transgression of the divine commandments, and therefore it no longer was a sanctuary, a holy place, but a house of abominations.— Nebuchadnezzar took all the holy vessels used in the Temple-worship to Babylon and put them in the "treasure-house" of his chief idol. Dan. 1, 2.

Brake down the walls of Jerusalem — They were considered well-nigh impregnable. The enemy used huge battering-instruments. — For a vivid description of the destruction of Jerusalem see Lamentations of Jeremiah.

THE CAPTIVITY.

The fugitives that fell away — The deserters.

The poor of the land — Who were not likely to give him any trouble. They were to till the soil, lest the fields be left fallow and uncultivated and he derive no profit from this new part of his dominion.

The pillars of brass — Here the sacred vessels and other things of value are mentioned which one of the chief officers of Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple. For a description of them see 1 Kings 6 and 7. According to Ezra 1, 11 the number of gold and silver vessels robbed from the Sanctuary totaled 5,400. At the close of the Captivity they were restored to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem. — "The Lord hath cast off His altar," sighed Jeremiah, Lam. 2, 7; "He hath abhorred His Sanctuary!"

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CATECHISM: Third Commandment. Close of Commandments. Cat., Qu. 85; Deut. 27, 26 ("cursed").

HYMNS: 48; 55; 57.

BIBLE READINGS: Lam. 1, 1—11; chap. 4.

From the Babylonian Captivity to the Birth of Christ.

(588 B. C. to the Birth of Christ.)

65. The Prophet Daniel.

All the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, God's chosen people, had been carried into captivity, forcibly ejected from the Promised Land, and the beautiful Temple had been destroyed. For seventy years the people of Judah, out of whose midst the Messiah was to issue forth, were scattered throughout the great Babylonian Empire. The gates of hell seemed to have prevailed against the Church of God. — However, even in this darkest period of the Old

Testament Church the Lord kept the spark of faith burning in many a heart; indeed, we even hear of heroes of faith during those years of dreary captivity.

Daniel at the Babylonian Court.

Master of eunuchs — The chief chamberlain, a high officer at the court of the mighty king.

Certain of the children of Israel — Youths of the best Jewish families, including sons of the last kings of Judah ("the king's seed"), were to be prepared and fully trained for service at the Babylonian court. Only such, however, were to be selected as had no physical defect ("no blemish"), were very handsome ("well-favored"), bright and well-gifted, and willing to learn and acquire the best education obtainable in the realm and make good use of it. The Chaldeans at court were the masters of science, and they were to be the teachers of these youths.

Daily provision — The youths were to get the same choice meals as were found on the royal table.

Daniel = "God my Judge." Perhaps of royal descent. He was taken to Babylon during the reign of Jehoiakim, about eighteen years before the total destruction of Jerusalem (under Zedekiah). He is one of the four major prophets. His was a life of faithful service of Jehovah, of courage and steadfastness under the most trying circumstances, even in the face of a cruel death. He was a true saint of the highest type. — His book contains very important prophecies of the Messiah and of His greatest enemy on earth — Antichrist.

Shadrach, etc. — Of these three bold confessors we shall hear more in the following lesson.

Daniel Refuses to Defile Himself.

Purposed in his heart — In spite of his heathen surroundings and at the risk of arousing the mighty king's displeasure, Daniel made up his mind not to defile himself, render himself unclean in the sight of God, by eating anything that God's people in the Old Testament were forbidden

to touch and partake of as food: 1) animals that were declared to be unclean, 2) flesh of animals otherwise pronounced clean, but which had been strangled, or the blood of which had not been fully drained out, 3) or flesh of animals which had been sacrificed to idols.

Your faces worse liking — The king would at once notice that you and your friends would not be as well nourished and strong as your young companions ("your sort") at court, and I would lose my life on your account. Do not, therefore, ask such a thing of me.

Prove thy servants — Daniel had such strong faith in God that he confidently believed he and his friends would be just as strong and look fully as handsome as the heathen youths at court if for conscience' sake they would abstain from forbidden food. (First Commandment.)

Pulse — Vegetables of the bean family; here: vegetables of any kind.

Fairer and fatter in flesh — Jer. 17, 7: *"Blessed* is the man that trusteth in the Lord." And blessed is he who obeys His commandments. Close of the Commandments: "He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these Commandments."

God gave them knowledge, etc. — Additional blessings are mentioned here: The four Jewish lads had completely mastered the Chaldean language and all the other sciences in which they had received instruction from their learned teachers. They excelled the wise men of Babylon themselves. Daniel, the leader in faith and piety, had been favored with the special gift of prophecy and interpretation of dreams (like Joseph).

At the end of the days, etc. — After three years of study and training. (See first section.)

Found them — Upon rigid examination.

Magicians — Sorcerers; persons who had "familiar spirits." Lev. 19, 31; 20, 6. (See "Joseph before Pharaoh," p. 79.)

Astrologers — The priests of star-worshipers, who pretended to be able to foretell future events by observing the

movements of the heavenly bodies. (Cat., Qu. 26; Deut. 18, 10—12: "divination, observer of times," etc.) — Daniel and his friends practised neither the magic art nor astrology. What is meant here is that they were better versed in all the sciences taught at the king's university, so to speak, including the knowledge of the heavenly bodies, than the magicians and astrologers, who otherwise were the wisest of the wise.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams — Dreams sent by God.

His spirit was troubled — Also this uneasiness of mind was by the hand of God, who desired to reveal some important matters, matters that concerned His Church, to this mightiest of all monarchs of his day.

Gone from me — It has escaped my memory.

Show me the dream and the interpretation thereof — This was asking still more of his wise men than Pharaoh requested of the wise men of Egypt when that twofold dream worried him. The magicians of old (just as the present-day fortune-tellers do) boldly ventured a guess when asked to tell the meaning of a dream, or presumed to be able to foretell the future. But when Nebuchadnezzar demanded of his magicians and astrologers to divulge to him a dream the nature of which he had forgotten, they frankly acknowledged that such a thing was beyond the power and wisdom of man. 1 Cor. 2, 11: "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?"

Commanded to destroy, etc. — To his extremely unreasonable request, which, as the wise men told him, never before had been made by any "king, lord, or ruler," Nebuchadnezzar added the inhumanly cruel order to put them to death, to "cut them in pieces" (Dan. 2, 5), because they did not possess supernatural wisdom! Blind heathen that he was, he abused his power in accordance with the will of the devil, who is "a murderer from the beginning." John 8, 44. (Cat., Qu. 115.)

They sought Daniel and his fellows — "Who had not been summoned with the older members of the Chaldeans." (*Pop.*

Com.) — Now we shall see how God had His hand in all this. He wished to reveal His omnipotence and the depth of the riches of His wisdom, as well as His love, grace, and mercy, to this world-ruling nation that they and all peoples subject to them might "come unto the knowledge of the truth." (Cat., Qu. 183. 235.)

Show the king the interpretation — Daniel implored the king to stay the execution and promised both to tell and to interpret his dream.

Desire mercies of the God of heaven, etc. — He and his three friends united in fervent and humble prayer to God, beseeching Him graciously to reveal to him what the king wished to know. They confidently believed that their prayer would be heard because they asked something that tended to the glory of God. (Cat., Qu. 211—213.)

Revealed . . . in a night vision — At night, in ordinary sleep; however, in such a manner as to leave no doubt in his mind that God Himself had spoken to him.

Daniel blessed the God of heaven — He thanked the Lord 1) for saving his and his friends' lives by answering their fervent prayer, 2) for making known His wisdom and might for the spiritual welfare of untold souls among the blind heathen, to whom He revealed His glorious name. (Cat., Qu. 28.)

Daniel Tells the King's Dreams.

There is a God in heaven, etc. — It is impossible, O king, for men, even the very wisest, to comply with thy wish and command. Nor do any of thy lifeless and dumb idols know and understand things that are entirely hidden from the perception of man. But the true and living God, the "God in heaven," to whom I and my people pray, is omniscient, and it has pleased Him to reveal to me what kind of dream He has made thee dream and what this dream means.

What shall be in the latter days — In the distant future, hundreds of years hence.

The great image, etc. — In his dream the king had seen a statue in human form, of immense proportions and awe-inspiring. It was composed of five different materials:

1) the head of fine, pure gold; 2) the breast and arms of silver; 3) the belly and thighs of brass; 4) the legs of iron; 5) the feet partly of iron and partly of clay. "The material becomes less precious as we proceed, until it reaches common clay."

A stone was cut out, etc. — The statue was placed in the recesses of a huge rock formation, and suddenly, without human agency, "without hands," a rock directly overhanging the statue broke loose from the parent rock formation and demolished first the feet and then the whole image (see Dan. 2, 35), whereupon it miraculously grew and spread till it "filled the whole earth." Truly, a remarkable dream!

The Interpretation.

Thou art this head of gold — The Babylonian Empire was a mighty world-power, a closely knitted and fast-riveted one-man power, such as the world would not behold again.

Another kingdom — The Medo-Persian Empire (Cyrus); as inferior to the first world-empire as silver is to gold.

Third kingdom — The Greco-Macedonian Empire, set up in whirlwind fashion by Alexander the Great.

The fourth kingdom — The Roman Empire, the first ruler of which was Augustus, during whose reign Jesus was born. The Roman emperors ruled with a heavy hand, with the mailed fist, crushing all nations which would not willingly bow their knees before them.

A kingdom which shall never be destroyed — The revelation of this great truth was the principal reason why the Lord wanted Nebuchadnezzar's dream to be interpreted. The eternal kingdom of the Messiah is meant.

Not be left to other people — Christ, our heavenly King, needs and has no successor such as earthly kings.

It shall break in pieces, etc. — Neither the mighty of this earth nor the rulers of darkness, "the gates of hell," shall prevail against this kingdom.

It shall stand forever — It will outlast all worldly kingdoms and empires — remain in all eternity. (Cat., Qu. 142. Christ's triple Kingdom of Power, Grace, and Glory.)

The great God — The God of whom I am speaking is the Lord of heaven and earth, the All-Powerful. "He can create and He destroy." (Hymn 78, 1.)

The dream certain, the interpretation sure — Our God, who has revealed all this to me for thy benefit, O king, is all-wise and, what is more, absolutely truthful — *the Truth.* Therefore accept and believe what I have told thee in His name.

THE KING PROFESSES THE TRUE GOD.

Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face — He was so astonished and dumbfounded upon finding that young Daniel was able to tell him what his oldest wise men asserted exceeded the wisdom of any man upon earth that he prostrated himself before the prophet of God, giving all honor and praise, however, to the true God. God's name was hallowed by this until now blind pagan. (Cat., First Petition.)

Made Daniel a great man — He made Daniel governor of the most important province of the world-empire and chief of the wise men of the realm, heaping upon him the highest honors it was in his power to bestow. And to enable him, the poor youth, to live as became the most exalted prince of the land, he also gave him silver and gold and landed estates ("many great gifts").

Then Daniel requested, etc. — He had no desire to occupy such a high public station. A model of humility! (See Table of Duties: "To the Young in General.")

He set Shadrach . . . over the affairs of . . . Babylon — High honors were bestowed not only upon Daniel, but also upon his friends. Members of the despised, because subjugated and enslaved, nation, they had been exalted to the highest stations in the gift of the mighty king — a gracious divine reward for the faithful obedience to God and His Law. (Close of Commandments: "He promises grace and every blessing," etc.)

Sat in the gate of the king — "As his chief counselor and president of the various orders into which the wise men of Babylon were divided." (*Pop. Com.*)

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust"); Second Commandment ("call upon . . . praise"); Qu. 104 ("omniscient") 142; Second Petition.

Hymns: 346, 1. 2; 334, 1. 2. 5. 7; 63; 78; 262, 1—3; 93.

Bible Readings: Prov. 1, 7—19; Eccl. 11, 9; Deut. 28, 1—14; Job 28, 20—28; Rom. 11, 33—36.

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66. The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace. Dan 3

The favor of the mighty of this world is a most uncertain thing; very fickle indeed. The three friends of Daniel were to experience this after they had been so signally honored by that great monarch of Babylon. However, they were not turned aside like a deceitful bow (Ps. 78, 57) in the hour of temptation and in the day of tribulation which God permitted to come upon them, but remained faithful and confessed Him before men even in the face of grim persecution and a cruel, painful death. May we learn a lesson from them!

The Golden Image.

Nebuchadnezzar . . . made an image of gold — Probably upon his return from the conquest of Western Asia and Egypt. He wanted to celebrate his great victories, likely fifteen to twenty years after the interpretation of his dream by Daniel. — The image, including a pedestal of from thirty to forty feet, was ninety feet high and nine feet in width.

Dedication of the image — The unveiling of the statue was to be attended with great festivities, a monster celebration, at which, no doubt, numerous sacrifices were offered to the idols.

They stood — An act of worship.

A herald — "In ancient and medieval times an officer whose business it was to denounce or proscribe, challenge to battle, proclaim war or peace, and bear messages from a sovereign or from the commander of an army." "He was invested with a sacred and inviolable character."

Cornet — A sort of trumpet giving a loud and penetrating sound.

Burning fiery furnace — Probably a large furnace, like a brick kiln, with an opening at the top to cast in the materials; a second opening for the removal of slag, cinders, etc., or molten metal, was arranged below, in one of the sides, so that the material in the interior could be observed. — This mode of punishment of criminals was often employed by the Chaldeans.

Have not regarded thee — These Chaldeans, envious of the promotion which these three Jews, these "foreigners," had been favored with, had long been waiting for an opportunity to ruin them. (Cat., Qu. 44: "hurt . . . harm," etc.; 1 John 3, 15: "hateth.")

THE FIERY FURNACE.

Who is that God, etc. — A language similar to that used by Pharaoh. — I, the great ruler of Babylon, a world-empire, am mightier than the God whom you worship!

Our God, etc. — They boldly contradict the mighty potentate and profess their faith in Jehovah.

If not — Even if it should not please Him to deliver us.

We will not worship, etc. — Heroic faith in the face of cruel martyrdom: "We will *not*" obey thee, O king, and disobey the Word of our God! If we must suffer, it will be but a short time, and then our God will take us into paradise. (Cat., Qu. 15; Matt. 10, 28.)

Full of fury — Flew into a rage. The Oriental rulers were not accustomed to being contradicted. Theirs was a despotic rule.

Seven times more — As hot as it could be made. We would say, ten times more.

Bound — With fetters, presumably of metal, to insure against their escape.

Slew those men — The king's officers suffered death from the intense heat of that furnace. All the greater the miracle of which our next paragraph tells.

Miraculously Saved.

Astonished — Sitting opposite the side-opening of the big furnace, which afforded a view into the interior, Nebuchadnezzar was dumbfounded to see that, instead of lying prostrate and writhing in the flames, the three men who had been cast into the furnace were walking about unfettered and unharmed; and, lo, there was a fourth person with them!

Son of God — According to a belief prevalent among the heathen nations, the gods often sent their sons as messengers. — This fourth man was an angel of God. (Cat., Qu. 114 ["great power"; serve mankind"]; Ps. 34, 7; 91, 11. 12.)

Servants of the most high God — Daniel had revealed the true God to Nebuchadnezzar when he interpreted a dream for him. Later, however, he had fallen back into idol-worship. Now he is reminded of what Daniel had told him, and he again acknowledges the God of Daniel and these three Jewish youths as the true God in the presence of all the princes and dignitaries round about him. — It was a big opportunity for the heathen of the entire world-empire to embrace the true religion.

Not an hair of their head, etc. — It was a most astounding miracle and must have made a great impression on those who saw it.

Who hath sent His angel — Which a while ago I did not believe to be possible. (He had boasted: "Who is that God," etc.)

Who hath delivered His servants — He could not but acknowledge that it was the almighty God of heaven and earth who had saved those three men from the murderous flames of yon furnace.

That trusted in Him — (First Commandment.)

There is no other God, etc. — Another notable confession. Indeed, God "left not Himself without witness" (Acts 14, 17) already in the Old Testament, and still they "would not" (Matt. 23, 37) "seek the Lord if haply they might feel after Him and find Him" (Acts 17, 27), "so that" — to emphasize this again — "they are without excuse" (Rom. 1, 20).

Promoted Shadrach, etc. — Advanced them to still higher positions than they had held before. God honors those who honor Him. 1 Sam. 2, 30. (Cat., Qu. 88; 1 Tim. 4, 8.)

Catechism: Third Chief Part, Qu. 265. First Commandment, Qu. 16. — Angels, Qu. 114.

Hymns: 376, 1; 377; 333, 2; 372, 3. 4; 273, 4; 526, 1. 15; 501, 7. 8.

Bible Readings: Dan. 4; Is. 43, 1—3; Ps. 66.

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67. Belshazzar.

Dan 5

God had shown His "eternal power and Godhead," His glory and majesty, to Nebuchadnezzar and to "all the rulers of the provinces" of the mighty Babylonian Empire, but "they glorified Him not as God," Rom. 1, 21; instead of accepting Him as their God and Savior, these Gentile rulers of the world preferred to serve sin and their idols. Because they rejected Him who with loving-kindness sought to draw them to Himself, Jer. 31, 3, He rejected them, Hos. 4, 6. The Babylonian Empire fell, fell suddenly, making way for the Medo-Persian Empire.

Belshazzar's Feast.

Belshazzar — The last king of Babylon, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, coregent with his father Nabonidus (Nabunaid), who, at the time of our lesson, 538 B. C., was engaged against the Persians and had left his son in charge of the affairs of the kingdom, so that he was virtually king. He was quite young, probably only seventeen years old.

A Babylonian tablet found by Dr. Sidney Smith "definitely states that Nabonidus raised his son [Belshazzar] to sovereign power on the eve of his own departure on a military expedition to Tema (the North Arabian oasis of Teyma mentioned in Job 6, 19; Is. 21, 14; Jer. 25, 23). It reads: 'A camp he [Nabonidus] entrusted to his eldest-born; an army he caused to go forth with himself. He loosed his [Belshazzar's] hands; he *entrusted to him the sovereignty,* while he himself set out on an expedition. The forces of Akkad [Babylonia] advanced with him; toward the

town of Tema he set his face. He set out on a distant march, a road not within reach of old." (*Theol. Monthly*, 1925, 246.)

Made a feast — Very likely at the beginning of his virtual reign. Though the army of Darius, the Median king, was encamped about the city, he felt secure, because the capital was strongly fortified and also protected by moats, or trenches, filled with water, surrounding the walls.

Lords — Governors of the provinces.

Drank wine — He and his lords gave themselves over to revelry.

Commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, etc. — An act of blasphemy. By thus desecrating the holy vessels formerly used in the Temple service at Jerusalem, he wanted to show in the presence of the nobles of his empire that the God of Israel, who had given such plain evidence of His power and majesty in the days of his grandfather (two preceding lessons), was inferior to the great king of Babylon and his idols.

Praised the gods, etc. — Gave the glory due to God to "graven images." (Cat., Qu. 15. See *Comp. Bible Hist.*, Lesson 42, p. 89; 62, p. 134.)

The Handwriting on the Wall.

In the same hour — Suddenly, while they were carousing and praising their idols.

Fingers of a man's hand — A mysterious hand, but shaped like the hand of a man.

Upon the plaster of the wall — "Upon a spot of the wall which was particularly exposed to the light from the lamp above the king."

The king's countenance was changed, etc. — He turned deathly pale and lost the control of his limbs, which shook and trembled furiously for fear.

He cried aloud — In great agony of fear.

Bring in the astrologers and soothsayers — See Lesson 65 ("magicians and astrologers").

Could not read the writing — The Lord God Almighty, who a minute ago had been despised and blasphemed by

the king and his nobles, now revealed to them in His wrath that the idols which they had praised were impotent and "nothing in the world" (1 Cor. 8, 4).

Then was Daniel called — Belshazzar's mother (Dan. 5, 10), who remembered that Daniel had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, advised her son to call this prophet of God, who seems no longer to have occupied the position of honor given him by Nebuchadnezzar and therefore was living in comparative obscurity.

The Interpretation of the Mysterious Handwriting.

Daniel read the writing, etc. — Note the contrast: The king's wise men could *not* 1) read the handwriting on the wall nor 2) interpret it, while Daniel 1) "read the writing and 2) made known unto the king the interpretation." Thus it became clear to the king and all his nobles that the God of Daniel and of the despised Jewish captives was vastly superior to their gods both as to wisdom and power.

Thou hast lifted up thyself, etc. — Fearlessly, like Nathan, Elijah, Jeremiah, and, in the time of Christ, John the Baptist, Daniel reproved the mighty king — 1) for having lifted himself up in pride against the true God, who had revealed Himself to his grandfather three times (Dan. 2, 3, 4); 2) for having desecrated the holy vessels of His Temple; 3) for having given the praise due to the Lord to his dumb and lifeless idols; 4) for treating the Creator and Preserver of his life, of his every breath, with contempt, as beneath his notice.

Then was the hand sent, etc. — Because of thy blasphemous conduct, over and above in the presence of all the governors of your provinces, the Lord of heaven and earth, in His wrath, sent this mysterious hand, whose writing seals thy doom.

This is the interpretation — That mysterious hand wrote four words, and my God, the God whom I and my people worship, has revealed to me how they are to be read and interpreted. 1) The first and second words are alike and mean that the end of thy kingdom is at hand. 2) As

a merchant, in weighing the gold and silver received for his wares, sometimes finds that they are short in weight, so thou hast fallen far short of what thou oughtest to have been as king, especially as thou mightest have known the will of God. 3) Thy world-kingdom will be divided between the Medes and Persians.

Belshazzar . . . slain — The enemy (the Medes and Persians), having, it is said, turned aside the bed of the river Euphrates from its natural channel, gained an entrance into the city and conquered the Babylonians (which had been made more easily possible because Nabonidus had taken his army on an expedition of conquest), and Belshazzar lost his life.

Darius . . . took the kingdom — Darius, then sixty-two years old (Dan. 5, 31), by agreement with Cyrus, the Persian, with whom he was associated in the government ("Medes and Persians"), was given the kingdom of Babylon. We shall hear of him again in the next lesson.

Catechism: First and Second Commandments. Close of Commandments. First Article ("in whose hand thy breath is": "God has made me . . . still preserves them").

Hymns: 392, 2. 3; 381; 48; 394.

Bible Readings: Is. 43, 14—17; Jer. 50, 1—16; 51, 1—64.

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68. Daniel in the Lions' Den. Dan. 6

In this lesson we shall again hear of Daniel, that great man of God who lived during the long period of the Babylonian Captivity. Having until now learned principally of the wonderful wisdom with which God endowed him, we shall now hear of his great steadfastness, his piety, and his heroic faith. His implicit trust in the Lord was not put to shame.

The Decree of Darius.

Three presidents — The empire of Darius was divided into 120 provinces, at the head of each of which was a governor, and these governors were responsible to three presidents, or ministers, one of whom was Daniel.

Daniel was first — Daniel was easily the wisest, ablest, and most faithful of these three ministers.

To set him over the whole realm — To make him his prime minister. (See Lesson 18: Joseph.)

Occasion against Daniel — The preferment shown Daniel by the king aroused bitter jealousy against Daniel in the hearts of the other two presidents, and they observed all his actions and pried into his official acts, hoping to be able to accuse him of maladministration of office.

He was faithful — So scrupulously faithful was Daniel in the performance of his duties that the searching eyes of the two presidents, and all the men whom they, no doubt, asked to watch him, could detect no fault in him. — What high praise for this man of God! (Table of Duties: "To Servants," etc.: "not with eye-service . . . as to the Lord and not to men.")

Concerning the Law of his God — We must try to prove to the king that Daniel's religion cannot be tolerated, being harmful to the welfare of the state, and that as an enemy of the realm he must be put to death.

Assembled together — Without the knowledge of Daniel, secretly, the two presidents had called all the princes together, and they concocted a scheme, or plot, against the life of him whom they hated. (Fifth and Eighth Commandments.)

Ask a petition . . . save of thee — They laid a flattering proposition before him. He, the great monarch, ought to receive divine honor from his subjects, at least for a period of thirty days.

Cast into the den of lions — Oriental rulers of those days kept lions, enclosed by walls, to keep them from breaking out. Criminals were disposed of by being cast into these dens. This speedy execution was in keeping with the customs of the times.

Darius signed the decree — Prompted thereto by vanity. (Cat., Qu. 15: he, a creature, wished to be adored as God; Is. 42, 8; Matt. 4, 10.)

Daniel Steadfast.

When Daniel knew — Learned, found out. He also knew that the king's decrees were unalterable.

His windows — Openings in the walls, either with permanent bars as protection or with lattice-work doors, which could be opened or closed.

In his chamber — "An apartment raised above the flat roof of a house at one corner or upon a towerlike annex to the building, with latticed windows, giving free circulation to the air." (*Cambridge Bible.*)

Toward Jerusalem — Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, had asked the Lord to hear the prayers of His people when they would languish in captivity or be in strange lands, if they would pray with their faces toward Jerusalem. 1 Kings 8, 46 ff.

Kneeled — An attitude showing humility and earnestness.

Three times a day — According to the custom of the Jews, at nine, twelve, and three o'clock. Ps. 55, 17. He obeyed God rather than men. (Second Commandment; Cat., Qu. 28. 44; Acts 5, 29.)

Prayed and gave thanks — The two forms of prayer commanded us: 1) asking God to grant us spiritual and temporal gifts; 2) thanking Him for prayers heard and blessings received. (Second Commandment: 1) "call upon . . . pray, 2) praise and give thanks.")

Found Daniel praying — He fearlessly confessed God before men. Matt. 10, 32.

Daniel regardeth not thee — 1) He does not honor you as *god,* for he continues to pray to his God instead of to you; 2) he also fails to honor you as *king,* his lord, by acting as if he did not have to obey you.

The king was sore displeased — (The words "with himself," which ought to be added, Dan. 6, 14, are missing in our *Bible History.*) Too late he discovered the trap set for him. It made him extremely sad to think that his most trusted servant was to be taken from him and suffer such a horrible death.

Set his heart, etc. — He racked his brain thinking of ways and means of saving Daniel. (A poor "god" who dare not act as he should like to have done!)

No decree . . . may be changed — The princes held him to his decree. They felt satisfied that now their hated "rival" would be caught in the trap which they had set for him.

In the Den of Lions.

Then the king commanded, etc. — One sin followed in the wake of the other: 1) permitting himself to be worshiped as god; 2) sacrificing his most trusted servant to the fiendish spite of the princes. (Other examples of sin upon sin: Cain [envy, hatred, murder]; Joseph's brothers; David; etc.)

Thy God . . . will deliver thee — His conscience was troubled; he knew he was doing wrong. And now he hoped that the God of Daniel would do what he could and should have done before: save Daniel's life!

Upon the mouth of the den — Over the opening.

The king sealed — Clay or wax was daubed over the stone, and on this the royal signet was impressed. If Daniel's God would protect him from the voracious wild beasts, the stone and seal were to prevent his enemies from getting possession of him and putting him to death in some other way.

Passed the night fasting — He realized with increasing vividness what precious jewel he was losing through his own fault.

Daniel's Deliverance.

With a lamentable voice — With a voice showing uncontrollable grief; in an agony of anxiety; between hope and fear.

My God hath sent His angel — (Cat., Qu. 114. Hymn 23, 7.)

Shut the lions' mouths — The "living God," of whom Darius had just spoken, had performed an astounding miracle. Daniel gave all glory to God. (First Article: "God . . . Almighty." First Commandment.)

The king was exceeding glad — Overjoyed to know that he would not be deprived of his most excellent prime minister. He had Daniel pulled up out of the lions' den by means of a rope.

Those men which had accused Daniel — They fell into the pit which they had dug for a good man. The king's favor was, most unexpectedly for them, turned into highest displeasure. — According to the custom of the country their women and children suffered the same fate. See 2 Kings 9, 26.

Brake all their bones in pieces — This made the protection of Daniel stand out all the more as a divine miracle. The hungry lions caught these enemies of Daniel up in their mouths before ("or ever" = ere ever) they had fully reached the ground.

Peace be multiplied unto you — A form of common salutation, which in the mouths of heathen meant nothing more than the "good morning" of an unbeliever in our day. Spoken by Christ and the apostles, it meant the peace or grace of God the Father merited for us by Him.

I make a decree, etc. — Through this decree, which was published in the world-kingdom of the Medes and Persians, the name and majesty of the true God was again made known to the blind heathen. But they did not seek Him, as they should have done. Acts 17, 27. On Judgment Day they will therefore "be without excuse." Rom. 1, 20. (Cat., Qu. 104.)

Daniel prospered — God graciously rewarded His faithful confessor. He was reinstated as prime minister. 1 Sam. 2, 30: "Them that honor Me I will honor."

Catechism: First Commandment ("trust"), Qu. 16; Second Commandment, Qu. 28; Eighth Commandment ("slander nor defame"), Qu. 68; First Article ("against all danger"), Qu. 122; Close of Lord's Prayer, Qu. 265.

Hymns: 498, 7; 501, 7. 8; 38, 5; 377.

Bible Readings: Ezek. 14, 13—23; Matt. 10, 28—33; Ps. 91; Dan. 9.

69. Esther.

The Babylonian captivity of the Jews lasted seventy years, as the prophet of the Lord had foretold. At the end of that period, Cyrus, king of Persia, nephew of Darius, whom he succeeded as king of Babylonia, permitted the Jews to return to their country and to build the Temple at Jerusalem, 536 B. C. Though great numbers of Jews gladly availed themselves of the opportunity to settle anew in the land of their fathers, not a few voluntarily remained in the country in which they and their fathers had been captives so many years.

Esther Chosen Queen.

Ahasuerus — Better known as Xerxes; so called in profane history.

Ethiopia — A great and powerful kingdom south of Egypt, "which embraced in its more extended sense modern Nubia, Sennar, Kordofan, and Northern Abyssinia." The country was settled by the children of Ham. Gen. 10, 6. The inhabitants were dark-skinned and "men of stature." Is. 45, 14; Jer. 13, 23. Moses married an Ethiopian. Num. 12, 1. — The world-empire of Ahasuerus comprised 127 provinces. Esther 1, 1.

Made a feast — He called a council of the princes of his realm for the purpose of invading Greece with an army of a million or more soldiers and a large naval force. Previous to the campaign he provided a series of banquets for the chief men of his empire. The festivities lasted half a year.

Shushan — The favorite winter and spring residence of Ahasuerus in the eastern part of the Assyrian Plain.

Commanded to bring Vashti — When his heart was "merry with wine," on the seventh day of his carousal, he wanted to "show the people and the princes her beauty."

She refused to come — The consequence was that the king repudiated her as queen; for "his authority both as husband and as king had been set aside."

Mordecai — A Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, a God-fearing man, cousin and foster-father of Esther.

Esther — "Star." Because of her beauty, which excelled that of the other virgins brought to the king, she was chosen queen — an extraordinary honor for that Jewish maiden, who thus became the wife of the greatest monarch of his time.

Chamberlains sought to lay hand on the king — Two watchmen of the palace, influential men, had laid a plot to assassinate the king.

Mordecai told it unto Esther — He had saved the king's life, but had received no reward for it at the time.

Haman Seeks the Jews' Destruction.

Haman — An Amalekite, a race accursed and condemned by God. Ex. 17, 15; 1 Sam. 15. (See pp. 134. 227.) Ahasuerus made Haman Prime Minister of the empire.

Bowed and reverenced — (See Lesson 18: "Bow the knee!") Besides bowing to the new Prime Minister, the people were expected to give him reverence as one of the gods of the people.

Mordecai bowed not — Fearing God, he refused to perform an act of worship. (Idolatry. First Commandment.)

Destroy all the Jews — Exterminate all the Jews found in the Persian dominions. Bloodthirsty spirit; satanic revenge. (Cat., Qu. 47; Rom. 12, 19; Matt. 5, 21. 22.) The Scythians had been massacred about a century before. (*Pop. Com.*)

Keep not thy laws — The Jews were law-abiding citizens; only in this instance, where a human law conflicted with the divine Law, did they refuse obedience. (Cat., Qu. 44; Acts 5, 29.)

As it seemeth good to thee — Haman's injured pride was now to be satisfied. The king did not even investigate whether the charges of his Prime Minister, at least as far as *all* the Jews were concerned, were true. Nor was he aware of the fact that Esther was a member of the Jewish race. (See Esther 2, 10.)

Letters were sent — The royal decree ordering the ex-

termination of all the Jews was published in all the 127 provinces of the empire.

Mordecai charged Esther, etc. — He told her in unmistakable terms that it was her duty to endeavor to save her nation. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther 4, 14.

Whosoever cometh . . . not called — Oriental kings were arbitrary rulers, answerable for their deeds to no one — above the law of the land.

If I perish — Noble words of genuine love for her brethren and sisters in the faith! She was willing to sacrifice her life. John 15, 13. (Sum of Second Table, Qu. 36. 37.)

ESTHER BEFORE THE KING.

Held out to her the golden scepter — "The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord . . .; *He* turneth it whithersoever He will." Prov. 21, 1. He broke and hindered the evil counsel and will of the devil and the world against His chosen people. (Third Petition.) — The scepter, a wooden staff, or wand, five or six feet long, usually overlaid with gold or decorated with golden rings, with an ornamented point, was the symbol of royal authority.

Into the court — The inner court of the king's palace, where she could be seen by the king.

To the half of the kingdom — When in a good mood, Oriental rulers were overzealous in making big promises. (See Lesson 22 of New Testament.)

What is thy petition? — At the first banquet Esther could not muster sufficient courage to unburden her bosom, and so she invited the king and Haman to take dinner with her also the following day.

Glad heart — Haman was seemingly at the height of his career.

Mordecai . . . stood not up — This filled Haman with such deadly hatred against Mordecai that he and his wife planned to take what the world calls sweet revenge. (Cat., Qu. 47; Rom. 12, 19.)

The King Honors Mordecai.

Book of the chronicles — Probably rolls of parchment on which the most important happenings and historical events were recorded.

Mordecai had told, etc. — He had reported the plot of two would-be assassins and had not received a reward. Here again we see the hand of God. He had determined to frustrate the wicked plan of Haman against His Church, and He was gradually carrying out *His* plans for the downfall of the enemy of His people. The gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church. Matt. 16, 18. (Cat., Qu. 186.)

Let them array the man, etc. — Haman sought only his own glory and profit, and his heart was filled with enmity against his fellow-man. (Opposite of the sum of the Second Table.) — Note the four marks of honor: 1) royal apparel, 2) the royal crown, 3) being honorably escorted through the city on a royal steed, 4) and a royal proclamation setting forth his great excellence.

Do even so to Mordecai — A bolt from the blue sky! What a humiliation! But he did not humble himself under the mighty hand of God.

Haman's Destruction.

Esther said, O king, etc. — At the second banquet Esther told the king of the plot against her life and that of her people, thus revealing to him now that she was a member of the Jewish nation.

We are sold to be slain — "Sold"; for Haman had offered Ahasuerus a very large sum ("ten thousand talents of silver," Esther 3, 9; about twenty million dollars in our money) for the permission to exterminate the Jews.

Presume in his heart — Who has had the audacity to plan such an outrageously wicked thing?

They hanged Haman on the gallows — Thus God had saved His little flock in the great Persian world-empire. It is to show this that the Book of Esther was written and embodied in the Old Testament Scriptures. (Cat., Qu. 235; Luke 12, 32.) — In commemoration of this wonderful deliver-

ance the Jews yearly celebrated a feast, called Purim. Esther 9, 20—32; indeed, it is celebrated to this day, in the month of March. The festival was, and still is, "an occasion of great rejoicing. On the evening of the first day, which is a fast-day, the Jews assemble in their synagogs, where after the services the Book of Esther is read. When the name of Haman is reached, the congregation shouts, 'Let his name be blotted out!' The following days are spent in mirth and rejoicing, the wealthy giving presents to the poor."

The king took off his ring . . . Mordecai — Mordecai succeeded Haman as Prime Minister of the mighty King Ahasuerus.

Catechism: Third Petition ("When God breaks," etc.). Second Petition.

Hymns: 279; 280; 282; 498, 6.

Bible Readings: Pss. 10, 12, 46, and 124.

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70. The Return from the Captivity.

Ezra 1-6

After having languished in captivity, as exiles and slaves of heathen monarchs, the Jews were given an opportunity to return to the land of their fathers and to rebuild both Jerusalem and the Temple. It was still over five centuries until the coming of the promised Messiah, and particularly the tribe of Judah, out of which He was to come forth, must not be scattered as were the other tribes; it was to settle again in Canaan in orderly fashion, with the genealogy of the tribe kept intact until the birth of the Redeemer of the world, so that His descent from this tribe, and from "the house and lineage of David" in particular, might be indisputably established. — During the first century after the return from the captivity the Lord gave His people three more prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; but in the following four centuries no prophet's voice was heard, not until John the Baptist appeared and prepared the way for Him who shortly after proclaimed Himself, as John had

done for Him, the promised Messiah and Savior of the world.

In our lesson, the last from the Old Testament in our *Bible History,* we shall hear of the return of many of the Jews to their country and of the rebuilding of the house of God at Jerusalem.

The Proclamation of Cyrus.

Cyrus — Founder of the Persian Empire, nephew of Darius (Lesson 68). His empire included Persia, Media, Babylonia, and Chaldea. Isaiah, about 160 years previous, had prophesied by the mouth of the Lord that a king by the name of Cyrus would do the very thing of which we are told in this lesson. Is. 44, 28—45, 1—6.

The Lord stirred up, etc. — Another instance of the Lord's turning the hearts of kings whithersoever He wills. (See last lesson.) Here it is expressly stated. (Cat., First Article: "I believe in God the Father *Almighty,* Maker of heaven and earth" and *Ruler* of the world. Qu. 120.) — The events recorded in this lesson *precede* those of the previous lesson by about sixty years. This fact should not be overlooked by the teacher.

Made a proclamation — In the year 536 B. C. Couriers, or heralds, sent throughout the empire announced the fact publicly that King Cyrus permitted all the Israelites within his realm to return to Judah and Jerusalem. — Daniel (see last sentence of Lesson 68), who was one of his most honored princes and advisers, may have acquainted him with the prophecy of Isaiah concerning him, as well as with Jer. 25, 12 and 29, 10. — A tablet and a cylinder have been found with inscriptions recording Cyrus's part in the restoration of the Jews to their own country.

The Lord God of heaven — Cyrus acknowledged the God of Israel to be the true God.

Build Him a house — The Temple.

Whosoever remaineth in any place — Those who had built houses and bought and tilled farms of their own in the land of captivity. Jer. 29, 7.

Let the men of his place help him — All his neighbors round about were called upon to enable him to make the journey and have something to start with when he would settle in the new home.

Free-will offering for the house of God — The happy emigrants were to receive additional gifts, a large fund, with which to build the Temple.

The Return of the Captives to Their Home Country.

The chief of the fathers — The heads of families and the leaders among the Jews. — It is estimated that not more than one in six of the exiles returned to Palestine. Many were too old and infirm to undertake such a long journey, and their children would not leave them alone in the strange country; others were loath to bring the financial sacrifice involved. From the preceding lesson we may gather that during the reign of Ahasuerus (eighty years after the proclamation of Cyrus) there were still many Jews in his empire.

Strengthened their hands — According to the royal proclamation.

The vessels of the house of the Lord — Cyrus returned the vessels used in the Temple-service (Ezra 1, 9. 10: 2,499; v. 11: 5,400, including those of minor value) which had been put in a heathen temple by Nebuchadnezzar and profaned by Belshazzar.

The Temple Foundation Laid.

Cedar-trees from Lebanon — The same building material which Solomon obtained, and from the same source, when he built the first Temple. The logs were floated from some Phenician port to the harbors ("sea") of Joppa.

Some . . . offered freely — They loved the Word of God and desired to see His kingdom grow and spread. (Third Commandment and Second Petition.)

After their ability — That is God's will also in the New Testament. 2 Cor. 8, 12: "According to that a man hath."

Jeshua — A high priest after the Captivity. He was active in rebuilding the Temple and in reestablishing the

prescribed service. (By the prophet Zechariah represented as a type of Christ; see chap. 3, 1. 3. 8. 9.)

Zerubbabel — The leader of the first colony of Jews who returned to Jerusalem after the Captivity. He was of the family of David and an ancestor of our Lord. Matt. 1, 12. He was chiefly instrumental in restoring the religious rites of the nation.

Builded the altar — The altar of burnt offering, on which the daily sacrifices, in the morning and in the evening, had to be offered according to the Law of Moses. This was of prime necessity for the daily worship.

Feast of Tabernacles — (See p. 162.)

Laid the foundation — When the foundation of the Temple was finished, the returned exiles met for a service of praise and thanksgiving. (Special thanksgiving services when the corner-stone of a church or school is laid.)

Trumpets — Trumpets were used to publish the approach of festivals.

Cymbals — There were "loud cymbals," small round plates, two of which were held in each hand, one upon the thumb, the other upon the middle finger. When struck together skilfully, they made an agreeable sound. Besides these, "high-sounding cymbals" were used, two broad convex plates of brass, the concussion of which produced a shrill, piercing sound. (Ps. 150.) The cymbals were employed in connection with other instruments at Hebrew festivals.

Shouted with a loud voice — Very likely it was responsive singing. One company probably sang, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good," and the other responded, "For His mercy endureth forever." (Ps. 136, 1.) The Lord wants His people to sing lustily, to open their mouths wide (Ps. 81, 10), when they meet in public service. It is their *"duty* to thank and praise Him." (First Article.)

Many . . . wept with a loud voice — As it was only fifty-two years since the first Temple had been destroyed (although seventy years since the first captives had been taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar), there were quite a few of the older people who had seen the glorious structure built by

Solomon. The Temple they were building now was much inferior to the first one. Besides, the new Temple would not contain the Ark of the Covenant, the mercy-seat, Aaron's rod which had budded, the heavenly manna, the Shekinah, "the glory of the Lord" which covered the Tabernacle and filled Solomon's Temple, and many other costly treasures, nor would the edifice itself be so richly overlaid with gold and so gorgeously decorated throughout.

The Building Hindered.

The adversaries — The people who had been settled in Samaria by the Assyrians when, two hundred years before, they had driven the ten tribes into the Assyrian captivity. There were mingled with them a number of descendants of the ten tribes — a mixed race. They are called "adversaries" because, while they posed as friends and brethren, they were not worshipers of the true God, since their religion was a mixture of true and false (idolatrous) worship. (Third Article, Qu. 193 ["avoid all false churches" — unionism]; Matt. 7, 15; Rom. 16, 17.)

We seek your God as ye do — They knew their statement was not consistent with truth. (Second Commandment: "lie or deceive by His name"; Qu. 27: Matt. 15, 8).

Ye have nothing to do with us — That was an answer in accordance with God's will. (Cat., Qu. 193; 2 Cor. 6, 14—18: "not unequally yoked together . . . be ye separate.")

Weakened the hands of the people of Judah — They placed difficulties in the way of the Jews by attempting to discourage the builders, by seeking to obtain an injunction from the Persian government against them, etc.

This Temple Finished.

Haggai and Zechariah prophesied — God sent these two prophets — and still later also Malachi — to instruct and admonish the people, above all, however, to point them to the coming Savior.

Finished the house of God — About 515 B. C., twenty

years after the rebuilding had begun, during the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

Dedication . . . with joy — They instituted a lengthy and joyous celebration, bringing sin-offerings and burnt offerings and praising God for permitting them to return to the Land of Promise and to restore the true worship. One thing is to be said in praise of the postexilic Jews, to wit, that they did not fall into the sin of idolatry as grossly as did their ancestors. And yet, when, five hundred years later, the Messenger of the Covenant came (Mal. 3, 1), alas! most of "His own received Him not" (John 1, 11).

We have very few data regarding the size and structure of the second Temple. In all probability its inner dimensions did not differ materially from those of the Temple of Solomon. From 1 Macc. 4, 51 we learn that both divisions of the sanctuary proper were provided with curtains at the entrance. According to Josephus the Holy of Holies was empty, while Talmudists claim that it contained a large stone on which the high priest sprinkled the blood of atonement. The Holy Place contained an altar of incense overlaid with gold, and also a candlestick and a table of showbread. 1 Macc. 1, 22. The altar of burnt offering was of the same size as that in Solomon's Temple (Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, 1, 22), while instead of the brazen sea there was a simple laver. Eccles. 50, 3. Evidently the courts of the Temple also had several depositories and rooms for the priests. Ezra 8, 29; 10, 6; Neh. 3, 30; 10, 37; 12, 44.

This Temple was plundered and desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes B. C. 168, but Judas Maccabeus cleansed, restored, and rededicated it just three years later. Alexander Jannaeus built a wooden partition around the altar and that part of the Temple which only the priests might enter. (Josephus, *Ant.*, XV, 13, 5.) Pompey captured and entered the Temple, but did not sack it. Crassus, however, robbed it of its treasures in 54 and 53 B. C.

Catechism: Second and Third Commandments; Third Article.

Hymns: 525, 10; 505; 468; 465; 142.

Bible Readings: Neh. 9, 1—37; Ezra 9, 5—15; Hag. 2; Zech. 8; Jer. 25, 1—29.

APPENDIX.

Some Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfilments.

Gen. 3, 15: 1 John 3, 8; Gen. 12, 3: Gal. 3, 16; Gen. 49, 10: Luke 1, 32. 33; Jer. 33, 15. 16: Matt. 2, 5. 6; Micah 5, 2: Matt. 2; Mal. 3, 1: Matt. 11, 14; John 1, 23; Is. 7, 14: Matt. 1, 22. 23; Is. 9, 6. 7: Luke 2, 11. 12; Is. 53, 3—7. 12: Passion story; Deut. 18, 15. 18. 19: John 6, 14; Zech. 9, 9: Matt. 21, 5; Ps. 110, 4: Heb. 7, 23—25; Ps. 2, 6: Matt. 22, 42—44; Ps. 110, 1: Eph. 1, 20; Ps. 41, 10: John 13, 18. 21—30; Ps. 22, 2. 19: Matt. 27, 25. 46; Mark 15, 24. 34; Ps. 16, 10: Acts 2, 31; 13, 35. 37.

Types of Christ.

1. *Isaac.* He was the son of promise; Abraham's most beloved son; was to be offered by his father, on Mount Moriah, the site of the Temple with its altar of burnt sacrifice and the Ark of the Covenant; carried the wood needed for the sacrifice; allowed himself to be bound and laid upon the wood of sacrifice, willingly, without murmuring; was virtually dead to his father, but is given to him again, and returns to his father's house.

2. *Joseph.* Hated by his brothers because his father loved him so much, and because he predicted his future greatness; is sent to his brothers, who had left their father; his brothers devise a scheme to get rid of him, in order to prevent his dreams from coming true; is sold to the Ishmaelites, who had the same progenitor as they: Abraham; through suffering he is raised to glory: all the people must bow their knees before him; is not recognized by his brothers; is not ashamed of his brothers, though they were despised by the Egyptians.

3. *Moses.* Soon after his birth he was in danger of being killed; is saved by his foster-mother, God very evidently protecting him; becomes the savior of his people, leading them out of bondage; was the mediator between God and his nation; offers to bear God's wrath and punishment to save his people; was "faithful in all Mine [God's] house."

4. *Joshua.* Joshua and Jesus both mean savior. Joshua succeeded in doing what Moses was not able to do: led Israel into the Promised Land, which is a type of heaven; he vanquished the enemies of Israel.

5. *David.* Born in Bethlehem; as shepherd of his father's sheep he risks his own life to save the sheep; although anointed to be king, is little esteemed by his brethren; when he was persecuted by Saul, people of low station ("every one that was in

distress, and every one that was in debt," 1 Sam. 22, 2) "gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them" (these men, later on, became heroes — Jesus' disciples, poor, despised fishermen, became great apostles); all his enemies were humbled; crosses the brook Kedron weeping, but submitting to the will of God; shortly after again occupied the throne from which the rebels had intended to depose him.

6. *Solomon.* His name signifies peace (Christ is the "Prince of Peace"; "Peace on earth," was sung at His birth, etc.). Solomon built the Temple at Jerusalem (Christ is the Builder of the great spiritual temple, the Church). Solomon excelled all men of his time in wisdom (in Christ are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"). Solomon's kingdom was a glorious one; all subjects dwelt in peace and plenty (Christ's kingdom on earth is more glorious still, but, above all, His kingdom in heaven).

7. *Elijah.* A type of Christ with respect to his triumphal ascension.

8. The *paschal lamb* was a type of Christ inasmuch as its blood, spread on the two side-posts and on the upper door-post of the houses of the Israelites, saved them from the ravages of the destroying angel, as well as because none of its bones should be broken. (1 Cor. 5, 7. 8; John 1, 29; 1 John 1, 7; John 19, 33—36.)

9. The *high priest* was a type of Christ. On the Great Day of Atonement he offered a sacrifice for the sins of all the people; he was the people's advocate with God; he blessed the people; he bore the names of all the twelve tribes on his breastplate.

10. The *brazen serpent* in the wilderness was a type of Christ. (See John 3, 14. 15.)

11. The *cities of refuge* to which all those were commanded to flee for safety and protection who had killed some one "unawares," unintentionally. These refugees were at liberty to leave the city of refuge, and live free and unmolested anywhere as soon as the high priest had died during whose term of office the homicide had been committed. — Christ is the Refuge of sinners. A sinner fearing the wrath of the holy God, terrified at the accusations of His Law, which he has transgressed, and brought to the verge of despair by Satan, who, pointing to the divine Law, claims him as his own, may and shall *take refuge in Him* who has fulfilled the commandments of God in his stead — his Savior and his Advocate with the Father. "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me *hide myself in Thee.*" "Jesus, Lover of my soul, *let me to Thy bosom fly. Hide* me, O my Savior. . . . Other *refuge* have I none," etc. (Hymn 325, 1; 107, 1. 2.)

Biblical Weights, Measures, Money, and Time.

WEIGHTS.

	Avoirdupois.			*Troy.*			
	lb.	oz.	dr.	lb.	oz.	pwt.	gr.
A gerah	—	—	.439	—	—	—	12
10 gerahs = 1 bekah	—	—	4.39	—	—	5	—
2 bekahs = 1 shekel	—	—	8.9	—	—	10	—
60 shekels = 1 maneh	2	—	14.628	2	6	—	—
50 manehs = 1 talent	102	13	11.428	125	—	—	—

MEASURES.

Long Measure.	ft.	in.
A digit, or finger (Jer. 52, 21)	—	0.912
4 digits = 1 palm (Ex. 25, 25)	—	3.648
3 palms = 1 span (Ex. 28, 16)	—	10.944
2 spans = 1 cubit (Gen. 6, 15)	1	9.888
4 cubits = 1 fathom (Acts 27, 28)	7	3.552
1.5 fathoms = 1 reed (Ezek. 40, 3. 5)	10	11.328
13.3 reeds = 1 line (Ezek. 40, 3)	145	11.04

Land Measure.	mi.	paces	ft.
A cubit	—	—	1.824
400 cubits = 1 furlong (Luke 24, 13)	—	145	4.6
10 furlongs = 1 mile (Matt. 5, 41)	1	403	1
15 furlongs = 1 Sabbath day's journey (John 11, 18; Acts 1, 12)	2	132	4
24 miles = 1 day's journey	33	172	4

Liquid Measure.	gals.	pts.
A caph	—	0.625
1.3 caph = 1 log (Lev. 14, 10)	—	0.833
4 logs = 1 cab	—	3.333
3 cabs = 1 hin (Ex. 30, 24)	1	2
2 hins = 1 seah	2	4
3 seahs = 1 bath, or ephah (1 Kgs. 7, 26; John 2, 6)	7	4.5
10 ephahs = 1 kor, or homer (Is. 5, 10; Ezek. 45, 14)	75	5.25

Dry Measure.	pecks	gals.	pts.
A gachal	—	—	0.1416
20 gachals = 1 cab (2 Kings 6, 25; Rev. 6, 6)	—	—	2.8333
1.8 cabs = 1 omer (Ex. 16, 36)	—	—	5.1
3.3 omers = 1 seah (Matt. 13, 33)	1	0	1
3 seahs = 1 ephah (Ezek. 45, 11)	3	0	3
5 ephahs = 1 letech (Hos. 3, 2)	16	0	0
2 letechs = 1 kor, or homer (Num. 11, 32; Hos. 3, 2)	32	0	0

JEWISH MONEY.

A gerah (Ex. 30, 13)	$ 0.02.73
10 gerahs = 1 bekah (Ex. 38, 26)	0.27.37
2 bekahs = 1 shekel (Ex. 30, 13; Is. 7, 23; Matt. 17, 27)	0.54.74
50 shekels = 1 minah, or maneh (Luke 19, 13)	27.37.50
60 minahs = 1 talent	1,642.50
A gold shekel	8.76
A talent of gold	26,280.00

TIME.

The *natural* day was from sunrise to sunset.
The *natural* night was from sunset to sunrise.
The *civil* day was from sunset one evening to sunset the next.

Night *(Old Testament)*.

First watch (Lam. 2, 19), till midnight.
Middle watch (Judg. 7, 19), till 3 A. M.
Morning watch (Ex. 14, 24), till 6 A. M.

Day *(Old Testament)*.

Morning, till about 10 A. M.
Heat of day, till about 2 P. M.
Cool of day, till about 6 P. M.

Chronological Tables of the Old Testament.

B. C.	
4000	Creation of the world. Adam.
2944	Birth of Noah.
2344	The Deluge, or Flood.
2200	Tower of Babel. Dispersion of mankind.
1992	Birth of Abraham.
1917	Abraham arrives in Canaan.
1724	Joseph goes to Egypt.
1702	Jacob goes to Egypt.
1702—1487	The Israelites in Egypt.
1567	Birth of Moses.
1487	The Exodus.
1460—1440	Canaan settled by the Israelites. Joshua.
1440—1100	The Judges.
1100—975	The undivided kingdom.
1095—1055	Saul, first king of Israel.
1055—1015	David.
1015—975	Solomon.
975	Division of the kingdom.
900	Elijah. Ahab. Jehoshaphat.
880	Elisha. Jehu. Obadiah.
850	Joel.
800	Jonah; Amos.
750	Hosea (the prophet).
722	Termination of the Kingdom of Israel. Hezekiah. Isaiah; Micah; Nahum.
712	Jerusalem besieged by Sennacherib.
640	Josiah. Habakkuk.
620	Jeremiah; Zephaniah.
606	Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar. Beginning of the Babylonian Exile.
588	Termination of the Kingdom of Judah. Ezekiel; Daniel.
536	End of the Babylonian Exile. Return of first company of exiles to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Persian world-power since 538.
520	Haggai; Zechariah.
516	Completion of the second Temple.
458	Return of second large company of Jews to Jerusalem, under Ezra.

B. C.	
444	Nehemiah governor of Jerusalem. Malachi.
332	Alexander the Great subjugates Palestine. Macedonian sovereignty till 323.
322—203	Egyptian sovereignty.
260	The Septuagint (translation of the Old Testament into Greek).
203—140	Syria's sovereignty.
167—140	Wars of independence under the leadership of the Maccabees.
140—63	Palestine governed by the Maccabees.
136	John Hyrcanus destroys the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.
106	Aristobulus assumes the title of king.
63	Pompey in Jerusalem. Palestine under the dominion of the Romans.
37	Herod proclaimed King of Judea.
31	Beginning of the Roman Empire. Augustus first Roman emperor.
17	Herod begins to rebuild the Temple.
5 or 4	**Jesus Christ** is born. Herod's death.
1	Beginning of the Christian era.

Pronouncing Glossary.

Aar′-on
Ab
Ab′-a-na
Ab′-a-rim
Ab′-don
A-bed′-ne-go
A′-bel
A′bel-me-ho′-lah
A-bi′-a-thar
A′-bib
A-bi′-jah
A-bi′-jam
A-bim′-e-lech
A-bin′-a-dab
A-bi′-ram
Ab′-ner
A′-bra-ham
A′-bram
Ab′-sa-lom
Ab-ys-sin′-i-a
A′-chan (kan)
Ac′-cho (ko)
Ac′-ra
Ad′-am
A′-dar
Ad′-mah
A′-hab
A-has-u-e′-rus
A′-haz
A-ha-zi′-ah
A′-i
Aj′-a-lon
Ak′-a-bah
Ak′-kad
Am′-a-lek-ites
Am-a-zi′-ah
Am-e-no′-phis
Am′-man
Am′-mon
Am′-mon-ites
A′-mon
Am′-o-rites
Am′-ram
An′-a-kim
An′-ti-Leb′-a-non
An-ti′-o-chus
E-piph′-a-nes
A′-pis
A-ra′-bi-a
Pe-trae′-a
Ar′-a-rat
Ar-me′-ni-a
Ar′-non
Ar-phax′-ad
A′-sa
As′-e-nath
Ash′-dod
Ash′-er
Ash′-ke-lon
Ash′-to-reth
A′-sia (sha)
Mi′-nor
Assh′-ur
As-syr′-i-a
As-tar′-te
Ath-a-li′-ah
Aus-tra′-li-a
A-za′-zel
A-zo′-tus

Ba′-al
Ba′-al-im
Ba′-a-sha
Ba′-bel
Bab′-y-lon
Bab-y-lo′-ni-a
Ba′-laam
Ba′-lak
Ba′-rak
Ba′-shan
Ba-ta-nae′-a
Bath-she′-ba
Bed′-ou-ins
Be-er-she′-ba
Be′-la
Bel-shaz′-zar
Ben′-ja-min
Beth′-el
Beth′-le-hem
Beth′-shan
Beth-she′-mesh
Be-thu′-el
Be-zal′-e-el
Bil′-hah
Bo′-az

Caes-a-re′-a
Cain (cane)
Ca-i′-nan
Cain′-ites
Cai′-ro (ki)
Ca′-leb
Ca′-naan (nan)
Ca′-naan-ites
Car′-mel
Car′-mel-ite
Ce′-dron
Chal-de′-a
Chal-de′-ans
Chal′-dees
Che′-ops (ke)
Che′-nith (ke)
Cher′-u-bim
Chis′-leu
(kis′-lu)
Co′-dex
Si-na-it′-i-cus
Cras′-sus
Cy′-rus

Da′-gon
Da-mas′-cus
Dan
Dan′-iel
Dan′-ites
Da-ri′-us
Da′-than
Da′-vid
Deb′-o-rah
De-cap′-o-lis
De-li′-lah
Di′-nah
Do′-eg

E′-bal
E′-ben
E′-den
E′-dom
E′-dom-ites
E′-gypt
E′-hud
E′-lah
E′-li
E-li′-a-kim
E-li-e′-zer
E-li′-jah
E′-lim
E-lim′-e-lech
(lek)
El′-i-phaz

E-li′-sha
El′-ka-nah
E′-lon
E-lul′ (lyool)
En′-dor
En-ge′-di
E′-noch
E′-nos
E′-phra-im
E′-phron
E′-sau (saw)
Es-dre′-lon
Esh′-col
Es′-ther
Eth′-ba-al
E-thi-o′-pi-an
Eu-phra′-tes

Fay-oum′ (fi-yoom′)

Gad
Gal′-i-lee
Gath-he′-pher
Gau-lan-i′-tis
Ga′-za
Ge-ha′-zi
Gen-nes′ a-ret
Ger′-i-zim
Ger′-shom
Ge′-shur
Gib′-e-ah
Gib′-e-on
Gid′-e-on
Gil-bo′-ah
Gil′-e-ad
Gil′-gal
Gir′-ga-shites
Go-li′-ath
Go-mor′-rah
Go′-shen

Ha′-gar
Hag′-ga-i
Ham
Ha′-man
Ha-mit′-ic
Han′-nah
Ha′-ran
He′-brews
He′-bron
He-li-op′-o-lis
Her′-mon
He-rod′-o-tus
Hesh′-bon
Hes′-van
Hez-e-ki′-ah
Hi′-el
Hi-er-o′-max
Hin′-nom
Hi′-ram
Hit′-tites
Hi′-vites
Hor
Ho′-reb
Ho-she′-a
Hur
Hu-wa′-ra
Hyk′-sos

Ib′-zan
I-du-me′-a
In′-di-a
I′-saac (sak)
I-sa′-iah
Is′-cah
Ish-bo′-sheth
Ish′-ma-el
Ish′-ma-el-ites
I′-sis
Is′-ra-el
Is′-sa-char
I-yar′ (e-yär)

Jab′-bok
Ja′-besh-gil′-e-ad
Ja′-bin
Ja′-cob
Jaf′-fa
Ja′-ir
Ja′-pheth
Ja′-phet-ites
Ja′-red
Jeb′-u-sites
Jed-i-di′-ah
Je-ho′-a-haz
Je-hoi′-a-chin (kin)
Je-hoi′-a-kin
Je-ho′-ram
Je-hosh′-a-phat
Je-ho′-vah
Je′-hu
Jeph′-thah
Jer′-i-cho
Jer-o-bo′-am
Je-ru′-sa-lem
Jesh′-u-a
Jes′-se
Jews
Jez′-e-bel
Jez′-re-el
Jo′-ab
Jo′-ash
Job
Joch′-e-bed
Jok′-the-el
Jo′-nah
Jon′-a-than
Jop′-pa
Jop′-pah
Jor′-dan
Jo′-seph
Jo-se′-phus
Josh′-u-a
Jo-si′-ah
Jo′-tham
Ju′-dah
Ju′-das
Mac-ca-bae′-us

Ka′-desh-bar′-ne-ah
Kar′-nak
Ke′-dron
Ke-tu′-rah
Kid′-ron
Kir′-jath-je′-a-rim
Kish
Ki′-shon
Kis′-leu (lu)
Ko′-rah
Kor-do-fan′ (fän)

La′-ban
La′-mech (mek)
Le′-ah
Leb′-a-non
Le′-vi
Lot
Lux′-or
Luz

Mach-pe′-lah
Ma-ha′-la-le-el
Ma-ha-na′-im

Mal′-a-chi
Mam′-re
Ma-nas′-seh
Man′-e-tho
Ma-no′-ah
Ma′-ra
Ma′-rah
Mar′-ches-van (kes)
Mas′-sah
Medes (meeds)
Me′-di-a
Me′-di-an
Med-i-ter-ra′-ne-an
Men′-a-hem
Me-phib′-o-sheth
Me′-rom
Mes-o-po-ta′-mi-a
Mer′-i-bah
Me′-shach
Mes-si′-ah
Me-thu′-se-lah
Mi′-chal
Mid′-i-an
Mid′-i-an-ites
Mig′-dol
Mil′-cah
Mir′-i-am
Miz′-pah
Miz′-peh
Mo′-ab
Mo′-ab-ites
Mo′-loch (lok)
Mor′-de-cai (ca)
Mo′-reh
Mo-ri′-ah

Na′-a-mah
Na′-a-man
Na′-both
Nab-o-ni′-dus
Nab-u-na′-id
Na′-dab
Na′-hor
Na-o′-mi
Naph′-ta-li
Na′-than
Naz′-a-reth
Ne′-bo
Neb-u-chad-nez′-zar
Ne′-cho
Nile
Nin′-e-veh
Nin′-e-vites
Ni′-san
Nis′-roch (rok)
No′-ah
Nob
Nu′-bi-a

Og
On
Ol′-i-vet
Om′-ri
O-ri-en′-tals
Or′-pah
O-si′-ris
Oth′-ni-el

Pal′-es-tine
Pe′-kah
Pek-a-hi′-ah
Pe′-leg
Pe-ni′-el
Pen′-ta-teuch (tuke)
Pe′-or
Pe-re′-a
Per′-iz-zites
Per′-sia (sha)
Pe′-thor
Pe′-tra
Pha′-raoh (roh)
Phar′-par
Phe ni′-ci-a (shi-a)
Phi-lis′-tines (tins)
Pis′-gah
Pom′-pey

Rab′-bah
Rab′-sha-keh
Ra′-chel
Ra-gu′-el
Ra′-hab
Ra′-mah
Ra′-moth-gil′-e-ad
Re-bek′-ah
Re-ho-bo′-am
Reph′-i-dim
Re′-u
Reu′-ben
Reu′-el
Rib′-lath
Ruth

Sa-be′-ans
Sa′-lah
Sa′-lem
Sa-ma′-ri-a
Sa-mar′-i-tans
Sam′-son
Sam′-u-el
Sa′-rah
Sa′-rai (ri or ra)
Sa-rep′-ta
Saul
Se-bat′
Se′-ir
Se′-lah
Sen-nach′-e-rib (nak)
Sen′-nar
Se′-rug
Seth
Sha′-drach
Sha′-lem
Shal′-lum
Sham′-gar
Shar′-on
She′-ba
She′-chem (kem)
She-ki′-nah
Shem
Shem′-ites
She-phe′-la
Shi′-loh
Shim′-e-i
Shi′-nar
Shur (shoor)
Shu′-shan
Sid′-dim
Si′-don
Si′-hon
Sim′-e-on
Si′-nai (ni or na-i)
Si-na-it′-ic
Si′-van
Sod′-om
Sol′-o-mon
Ste′-phen (ven)

Su'-ez
Suph
Sy'-char
Syr'-i-a
Sy'-ro-
A-ra'-bi-an
Sy'-ro-
Phe-ni'-ci-an

Ta'-bor
Tal'-ma-i
(ma-i or mi)
Tal'-mu-dists
Tam'-muz
Tar'-shish
Te-beth'
Te'-ma
Te'-rah
Tey'-ma
Thebes (theebs)
Thoth'-mes
(mees)
Ti'-gris
Tim'-nath
Tir'-zah
Tish'-bah
Tish'-bite
Tis'-ri
To'-la
Tu-tankh-a'-men
Tyre

U-ri'-ah
Uz
Uz-zi'-ah

Vash'-ti

Xer'-xes
(zurk'-sees)

Yar'-muk

Zac-chae'-us
Zach-a-ri'-ah
Za'-dok
Zar'-e-phath
Ze-bo'-im
Zeb'-u-lun
Zech-a-ri'-ah
Zed-e-ki'-ah
Ze-rub'-ba-bel
Zif
Zil'-pah
Zim'-ri
Zin
Zi'-on
Zip-po'-rah
Zo'-ar
Zo'-phar
Zo'-rah

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The Maps in NELSON'S BIBLE ATLAS have been specially prepared and engraved from the latest surveys.

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Plain, sea of the . . . . . 4 - 2 D
Pontus Euxinus . . . . . 12 - 1 F
Pontus, and Pontus Galaticus . 12 - 1 F
Prophets, tombs of the . . . 10 - 3 C
Propontis . . . . . 12 - 1 E
Psephinus . . . . . 10 - 2 D
Ptolemais (= Accho) . . 6 - 3 A; 9 - 3 C; 9 - 6 E; 12 - 3 F
Puteoli . . . . . 12 - 1 A
Pyramids of Egypt . . . . 2 - 3 C

Raamah . . . . . 1 - 3 E
Rabbath-ammon . . . 3 - 5 D; 3 - 6 E; 4 - 1 D; 7 - 3 D
Rabbath-moab (= Ar of Moab) . 3 - 6 D; 3 - 7 E; 8 - 3 D
Rabbith . . . . . 7 - 2 B
Rachel's Tomb . . . . . 11 - 4 B
Ragaba . . . . . 7 - 2 C
Rakkon . . . . . 3 - 4 B; 7 - 3 A
Ramah (Asher) . 3 - 2 C; 6 - 2 B; 9 - 2 C
Ramah, or Rama (Benjamin) 8 - 1 C; 11 - 2 B
Ramah (Naphtali) . . . . 6 - 3 B
Ram Allah . . . . . 11 - 2 B
Ramath-mizpeh . 3 - 3 E; 7 - 1 D; 9 - 3 E
Rameses . . . . . 2 - 2 C
Ramoth-gilead . . . 3 - 4 D; 4 - 1 D; 7 - 2 D; 9 - 4 D
Red Sea . . . . . 1 - 3 D
Rehoboth . . . 3 - 6 B; 4 - 2 B; 9 - 6 E
Rephaim, valley of . . . . 11 - 4 B
Rephaims . . . . . 1 - 2 G
Rephidim . . . . . 2 - 4 E; 2 - 4 H
Resen . . . . . 4 - 2 B
Reuben, allotment of . . . 3 - 5 D
Rezpeh . . . . . 4 - 2 B
Rhegium . . . . . 12 - 2 A
Rhodes . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Rimmon (= Dimnah) 3 - 3 C; 6 - 3 B; 9 - 3 C
Rimmon, the rock (Benjamin) . 7 - 3 E
Rock, dome of the (Jerusalem) . 10 - 2 B
Rock Rimmon . . . 3 - 5 C; 7 - 3 B; 8 - 1 C; 9 - 5 C; 11 - 1 C
Rome . . . . . 12 - 1 A
Rosetta . . . . . 2 - 1 B

St. Stephen's Gate (Jerusalem) . 10 - 2 B
Sais . . . . . 2 - 2 B
Salamis . . . . . 12 - 3 F
Salcah . . . . . 3 - 6 E; 4 - 1 D
Salem, or Jerusalem . . . . 1 - 2 G
Salim . . . . . 9 - 4 C
Salmone . . . . . 12 - 3 D
Salt, city of . . . . . 3 - 6 C; 3 - 6 C
Salt Sea . . . . . 1 - 2 G; 3 - 6 C; 3 - 7 E; 8 - 3 C
Samarah . . . . . 4 - 3 C

Samaria . 3 - 4 C; 4 - 1 D; 4 - 3 A; 7 - 2 B; 9 - 4 C; 9 - 6 E; 12 - 3 F
Samos . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Samr et Tiniyeh . . . . . 2 - 4 G
Sardis . . . . . 12 - 2 E
Sarepta, or Zarephath . . 6 - 1 A; 9 - 2 C
Scythia . . . . . 1 - 1 E
Scythopolis (=Beth-shean) 7 - 1 C; 9 - 4 C
Seba . . . . . 1 - 3 D
Sechu . . . . . 11 - 2 B
Seir, mount (= Edom) . 2 - 2 G; 8 - 1 B
Seleucia . . . . . 12 - 2 F
Semechonitis, lake (= Waters of Merom) 6 - 2 B
Sephar . . . . . 1 - 3 E
Sepharvaim . . . . . 4 - 3 C
Sepphoris . . . . 6 - 3 A; 9 - 3 C
Sepulchre, Church of the Holy . 10 - 2 B
Serbal, mount . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Serbonis, lake . . . . . 2 - 1 D
Shafat . . . . . 11 - 3 B
Shalem, or Salim . . . . . 7 - 2 B
Shamir . . . . . 8 - 2 B
Shaphir . . . . . 8 - 1 A
Sharon, plain of . 3 - 4 B; 7 - 2 A; 9 - 4 B
Sharuhen . . . . 3 - 6 B; 8 - 3 A
Sheba . . . . . 1 - 3 E
Sheba (= Ophir) . . . . . 1 - 3 D
Sheba (Simeon) . . . . . 8 - 3 B
Shechem, or Sychem . . 1 - 2 G; 3 - 4 C; 4 - 1 D; 4 - 3 A; 7 - 2 B; 9 - 4 C
Shepherds' Field . . . . . 8 - 1 C
Sherafat . . . . . 11 - 4 B
Shihon . . . . . 7 - 1 B
Shiloh . . . . 3 - 4 C; 7 - 3 B; 9 - 4 C
Shinar . . . . . 1 - 2 D; 4 - 3 C
Shittim, valley of 3 - 5 D; 8 - 1 D; 9 - 5 D
Shunem 3 - 3 C; 4 - 1 D; 7 - 1 B; 9 - 3 C
Shur (Egypt), and Way of Shur . 2 - 2 D
Shur, or Seir . . . . . 2 - 2 G
Shushan (= Susa) . . . . . 4 - 3 D
Sidon, see Zidon 1 - 1 G; 3 - 6 E; 4 - 2 A; 4 - 1 D; 12 - 3 F
Sidonians . . . . . 1 - 1 G
Silicia . . . . . 12 - 2 A
Siloam, pool of . . . 10 - 4 B; 10 - 4 E
Siloam, village . . . 10 - 3 B; 10 - 4 E
Simeon, allotment of . . . . 3 - 6 B
Sin, wilderness of . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Sinai, mount . . . 2 - 4 E; 2 - 4 H
Sinites . . . . . 1 - 1 G
Sinope . . . . . 12 - 1 F
Sippar . . . . . 4 - 3 C
Sirah Well . . . . . 8 - 2 B
Smyrna . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Soba . . . . . 11 - 3 A
Socoh . . . . . 8 - 2 B
Sorek, valley of 3 - 5 B; 8 - 1 B; 9 - 5 B
Succoth . 2 - 2 C; 3 - 4 D; 7 - 3 C; 9 - 4 D
Suez . . . . . 2 - 3 D
Suez Canal . . . . . 2 - 2 D
Suez, Gulf of . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Surar, W. . . . . 11 - 4 A
Susiana . . . . . 4 - 3 D
Sychar . . . . 3 - 4 C; 7 - 2 B; 9 - 4 C
Sychem, or Shechem . . . . 7 - 2 B
Syracuse . . . . . 12 - 2 B
Syria . . . . . 3 - 6 E; 9 - 6 E
Syria (= Aram) . . . . 4 - 2 A; 4 - 1 D
Syrian Desert . . . . . 4 - 2 B

Taanach . . 3 - 3 C; 7 - 1 B; 9 - 3 C
Taanath-shiloh . . . . . 7 - 3 B
Tabor, mount . 1 - 2 G; 3 - 3 C; 4 - 1 D; 7 - 1 B; 9 - 3 C
Tadmor (= Palmyra) . . 3 - 6 E; 4 - 2 A
Tahpanhes (= Daphnæ) . . . . 2 - 2 D
Tamireh, W. . . . . 11 - 5 C
Tanis, or Zoan . . . . . 2 - 2 C
Taprobane (= Ophir) . . . . . 1 - 4 G
Tarentum . . . . . 12 - 1 B
Tarichææ . . . . . 9 - 3 B
Tarshish . . . . . 1 - 2 A
Tarsus (Cilicia) . . . 4 - 1 A; 12 - 2 F
Taura, Nahr, or Pharpar . . . 3 - 1 E
Taurus, mount . . . . . 4 - 1 A
Tekoa . 3 - 5 C; 8 - 2 C; 9 - 5 C; 11 - 6 B
Tekoa, wilderness of . . . . 11 - 6 C
Tema . . . . . 1 - 3 D
Temple at Jerusalem . . . . 10 - 3 E
Temple Street (Jerusalem) . . . 10 - 3 B
Thapsacus (= Tiphsah) . 3 - 6 E; 4 - 2 B; 7 - 3 B
Thebez . . . 3 - 4 C; 7 - 2 B; 9 - 4 C
Thessalia . . . . . 12 - 2 C
Thessalonica . . . . . 12 - 1 C
Thimnathah . . . . . 7 - 3 B
Thracia . . . . . 12 - 1 D
Thyatira . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Tiberias . . . . 6 - 3 B; 9 - 3 D
Tigris, river . . . . 1 - 2 D; 4 - 3 C
Timnath, or Timnah . . 3 - 5 B; 8 - 1 B
Timnathah . . . . . 9 - 4 C
Timnath-serah . . . 3 - 4 C; 7 - 3 B
Timsah, lake . . . . . 2 - 2 D
Tiphsah (= Thapsacus) . 3 - 6 E; 4 - 2 B; 7 - 3 B
Tiras . . . . . 1 - 2 C
Tirzah . . . 3 - 4 C; 7 - 2 B; 9 - 4 C
Tob . . . . . 3 - 3 D; 7 - 1 C
Tophel . . . 2 - 2 G; 3 - 7 E; 9 - 7 D
Tower that lieth out, the (Jerusalem) 10 - 3 E
Trachonitis (= El Leja) . . . 6 - 2 D
Tripolis . . . . . 4 - 2 A; 12 - 3 F
Troas . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Trogyllium . . . . . 12 - 2 D
Tubal . . . . . 1 - 2 D
Tyre 1 - 1 G; 3 - 2 C; 3 - 6 E; 4 - 2 A; 4 - 1 D; 6 - 1 A; 9 - 2 C; 12 - 3 F
Tyropœon Valley (Jerusalem) . . 10 - 3 B; 10 - 3 E
Tyrus . . . . . 8 - 1 D
Tyrus, ladder of . 3 - 2 C; 6 - 2 A; 9 - 2 C

Ummah . . . . . 6 - 2 A
Umm Shomer . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Ur of the Chaldees . . 1 - 2 E; 4 - 3 C
Urartu . . . . . 4 - 1 C
Uz . . . . . 1 - 3 D

Van, lake . . . . . 4 - 1 B
Via Dolorosa . . . . . 10 - 2 B

Walls of Jerusalem 10
Water Gate (Jerusalem) . . . 10 - 3 E
Well of Harod . . . . . 7 - 1 B
Wilderness of Beth-aven . . . 11 - 1 C
Wilderness of Judah . . . . 3 - 5 C
Wilderness of Judea . . . . 9 - 5 C
Wilderness of Paran . . 2 - 2 E; 3 - 9 E
Wilderness of Sin . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Wilderness of Sinai . . . . . 2 - 4 E
Wilderness of Tekoa . . . . 11 - 6 C
Wilderness of Zin . . . . . 2 - 2 F

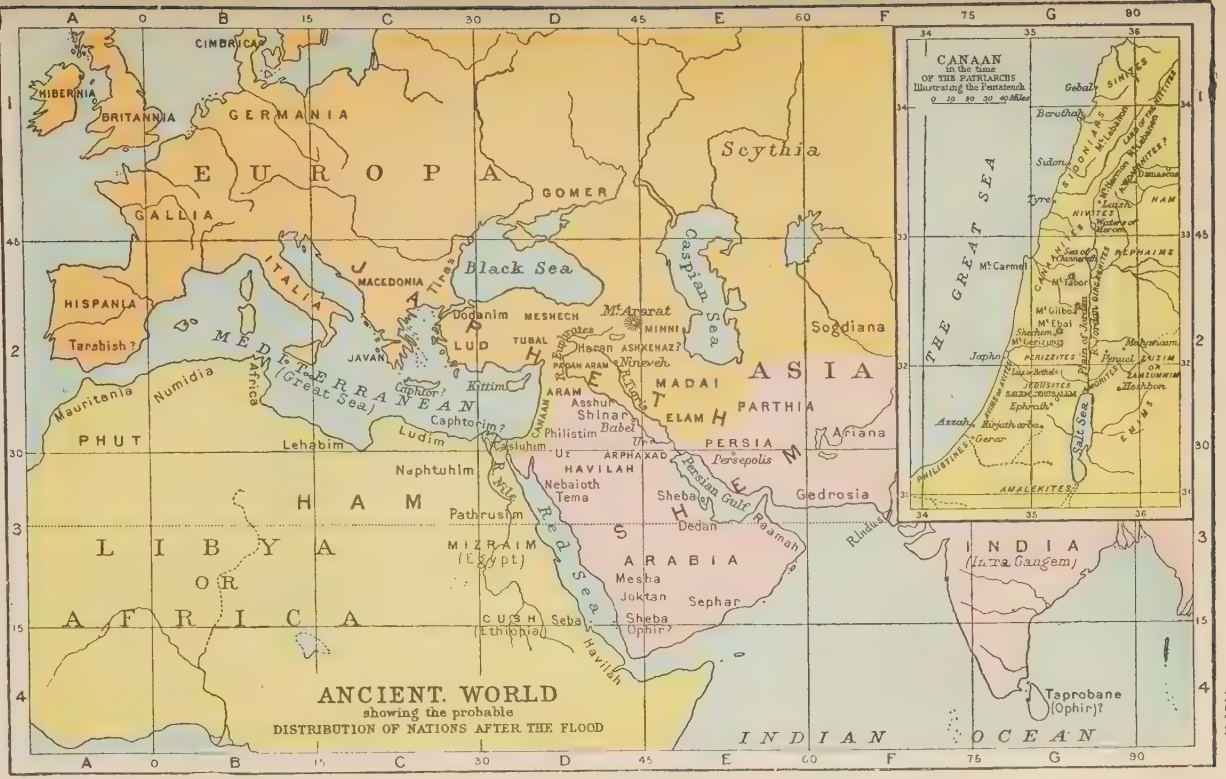
Yagur . . . . . 8 - 2 A
Yam Suph . . . . . 2 - 2 D
Yarmuk, river . . . 7 - 1 C; 9 - 3 D
Yazur . . . . . 7 - 3 A

Zaanaim, plain of . . . . 6 - 3 B
Zacynthus . . . . . 12 - 2 C
Zamzummim or Zuzim . . . . 1 - 2 G
Zanoah (Josh. 15. 34) . . . . 8 - 1 B
Zanoah (Josh. 15. 56) . . . . 8 - 3 B
Zaphon Amatha . . . 6 - 3 B; 7 - 1 C
Zarephath . . . . . 8 - 2 C
Zarthan . . . . . 7 - 3 C
Zawatin, W. . . . . 2 - 4 H
Zebulun, allotment of . . . 3 - 2 C
Zered, brook . . 2 - 1 G; 3 - 6 D; 8 - 3 C

Zereda . . . . . 11 - 1 B
Zidon, see Sidon . . . . . 3 - 1 C
Ziklag . . . . 3 - 6 B; 9 - 6 B
Zin, wilderness of . . . . . 2 - 2 F
Zion . . . . . 10 - 3 A; 10 - 3 B
Zion Gate (Jerusalem) . . . . 10 - 3 B
Ziph . . . 3 - 6 C; 8 - 2 B; 9 - 6 C
Ziz, cliff of . . . . . 8 - 2 C
Zoan, or Tanis . . . . . 2 - 2 C
Zoar . . . 3 - 5 D; 8 - 1 D; 9 - 5 D
Zoheleth . . . . . 10 - 4 E
Zorah . . . 3 - 5 B; 8 - 1 B; 9 - 5 B
Zorava . . . . . 6 - 3 D; 9 - 3 E
Zuzim, or Zamzummim . . . . 1 - 2 G

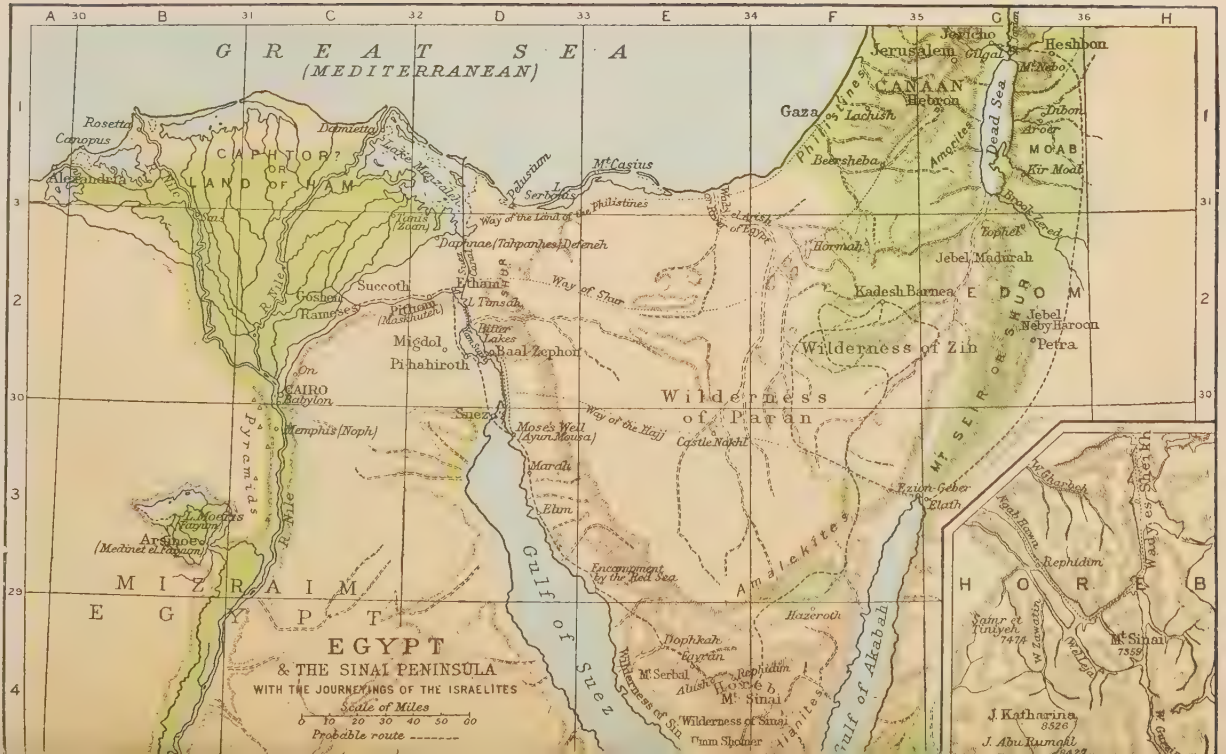
REFERENCES TO PLAN OF MODERN JERUSALEM.

1. Grotto of Jeremiah.
2. Church of the Tomb of the Virgin.
3. Pool of Bethesda.
4. St. Anne's Church.
5. Tower of Antonia.
6. Austrian Hospice.
7. Latin Convent.
8. Goliath's Castle.
9. Latin Patriarchate.
10. Greek Convent.
11. Pool of Hezekiah.
12. Knights of St. John Hospital.
13. Bazaars.
14. Tower of David (Hippicus).
15. Barracks.
16. Armenian Convent.
17. Jewish Synagogue.
18. Jews' Wailing Place.
19. Mosque El Aksa.
20. Solomon's Porch.
21. Tomb of Jehoshaphat.
22. Tomb of Absalom.
23. Tomb of St. James.
24. Tomb of Zechariah.
25. Fountain of the Virgin.
26. Lepers' Village.
27. House of Caiaphas.

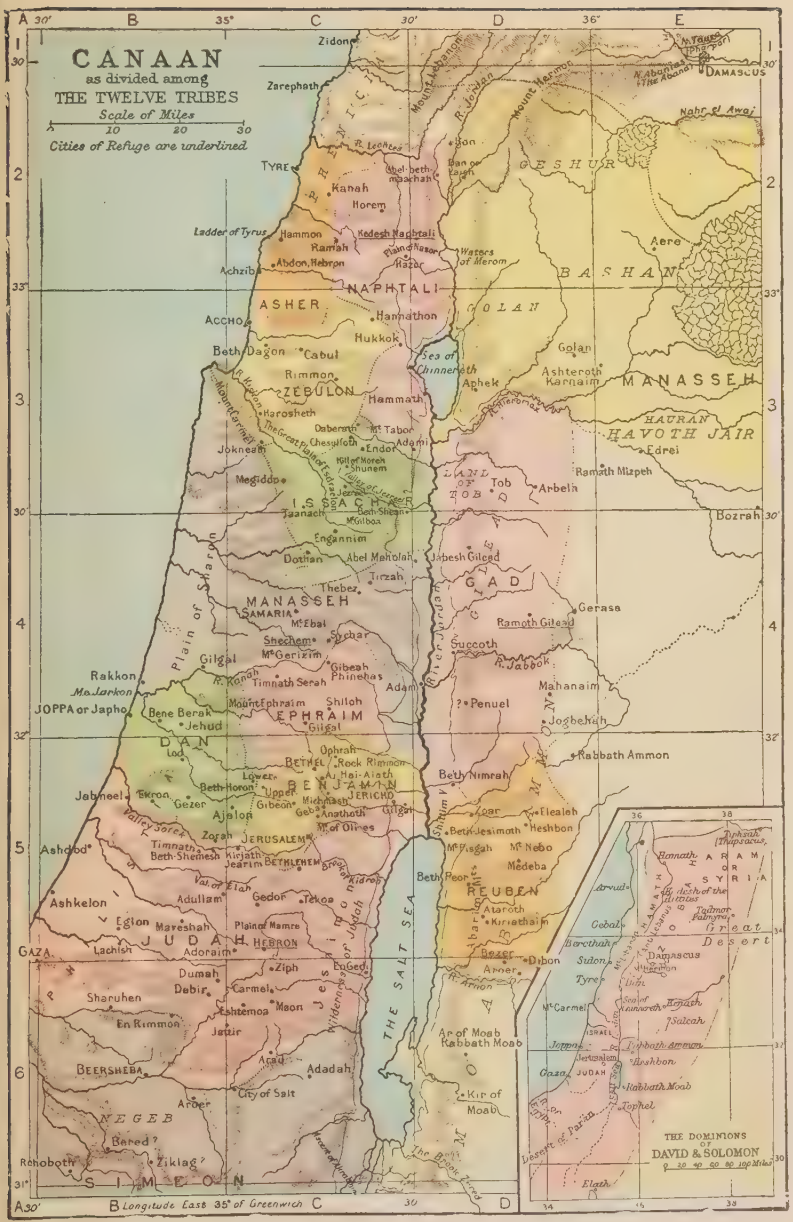

CANAAN
in the time
OF THE PATRIARCHS
Illustrating the Pentateuch
0 10 20 30 40 Miles
THE GREAT SEA
Gebal
Berothah
Sidon
Tyre
Laish
Dan
Damascus
Mt Carmel
Mt Tabor
Mt Gilboa
Mt Ebal
Mt Gerizim
Shechem
Japhia
Bethel
Ephraim
Jericho
Gerar
Azzah
Kirjatharba
Hebron
Mahanaim
Penuel
Salt Sea
Plain of Jordan
Sea of Chinneroth
Waters of Merom
Lasha
Hazazon Tamar
Zoar
Zeboim
Admah
Sodom
Gomorrah
Zeboiim
Zoar
Zuzim
Zamzummim
Emim
Rephaims
Amalekites
Philistines
Gerar
Jebusites
Salem Jerusalem
Sinites
Arkites
Arvadites
Zemarites
Hamathites
Hivites
Canaanites
Girgashites
Amorites
Perizzites
Kenites
Kenizzites
Edomites
Ishmaelites
Midianites
Moabites
Ammonites
Hittites
Jebusites
Amalekites
Perizzites
Rephaims
Zuzim
Emim
Zamzummim
Ham
Canaan
Japheth
Shem
Abraham
Lot
Isaac
Jacob
Esau
Joseph
Moses
Joshua
Caleb
Aaron
Miriam
Hur
Jethro
Balaam
Balak
Og
Sihon
Jericho
Ai
Gibeon
Hebron
Debir
Lachish
Eglon
Jabin
Sisera
Barak
Deborah
Gideon
Abimelech
Jephthah
Samson
Delilah
Eli
Samuel
Saul
David
Jonathan
Goliath
Solomon
Rehoboam
Jeroboam
Ahab
Jezebel
Elijah
Elisha
Naaman
Hazael
Jehu
Athaliah
Joash
Amaziah
Uzziah
Jotham
Ahaz
Hezekiah
Manasseh
Amon
Josiah
Jehoiakim
Jehoiachin
Zedekiah
Nebuchadnezzar
Daniel
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Mordecai
Haman
Ahasuerus
Vashti
Cyrus
Darius
Xerxes
Artaxerxes
Ezra
Nehemiah
Malachi
Zechariah
Haggai
Zerubbabel
Joshua
Ezekiel
Jeremiah
Baruch
Obadiah
Jonah
Amos
Hosea
Micah
Isaiah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation
HIBERNIA
BRITANNIA
CIMBRICA
GERMANIA
EUROPA
GALLIA
HISPANIA
Tarshish?
ITALIA
MACEDONIA
Tiras
Javan
Dodanim
MESHECH
TUBAL
LUD
Black Sea
Caspian Sea
Scythia
GOMER
Togarmah
Ararat
MINNI
Ashkenaz?
Sogdiana
ASIA
MADAI
PARTHIA
ELAM
PERSIA
Persepolis
Ariana
Gedrosia
INDIA
(Intra Gangem)
Taprobane
(Ophir)?
INDIAN OCEAN
Persian Gulf
Rindus
Raamah
Sheba
Dedan
ARABIA
Mesha
Joktan
Sephar
Havilah
Ophir?
Seba
CUSH
(Ethiopia)
Red Sea
MIZRAIM
(Egypt)
Pathrusim
Naphtuhim
Lehabim
Ludim
Caphtorim?
Philistim
Casluhim
Uz
ARPHAXAD
HAVILAH
Nebaioth
Tema
Babel
Ur
Asshur
Shinar
ARAM
Nineveh
Rivers of Eden
Pison
Gihon
Hiddekel
Euphrates
Kittim
Caphtor?
Mauritania
Numidia
Africa
PHUT
HAM
LIBYA
OR
AFRICA
DO MEDITERRANEAN
(Great Sea)
ANCIENT WORLD
showing the probable
DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONS AFTER THE FLOOD

No. 9.

Printed in Great Britain.

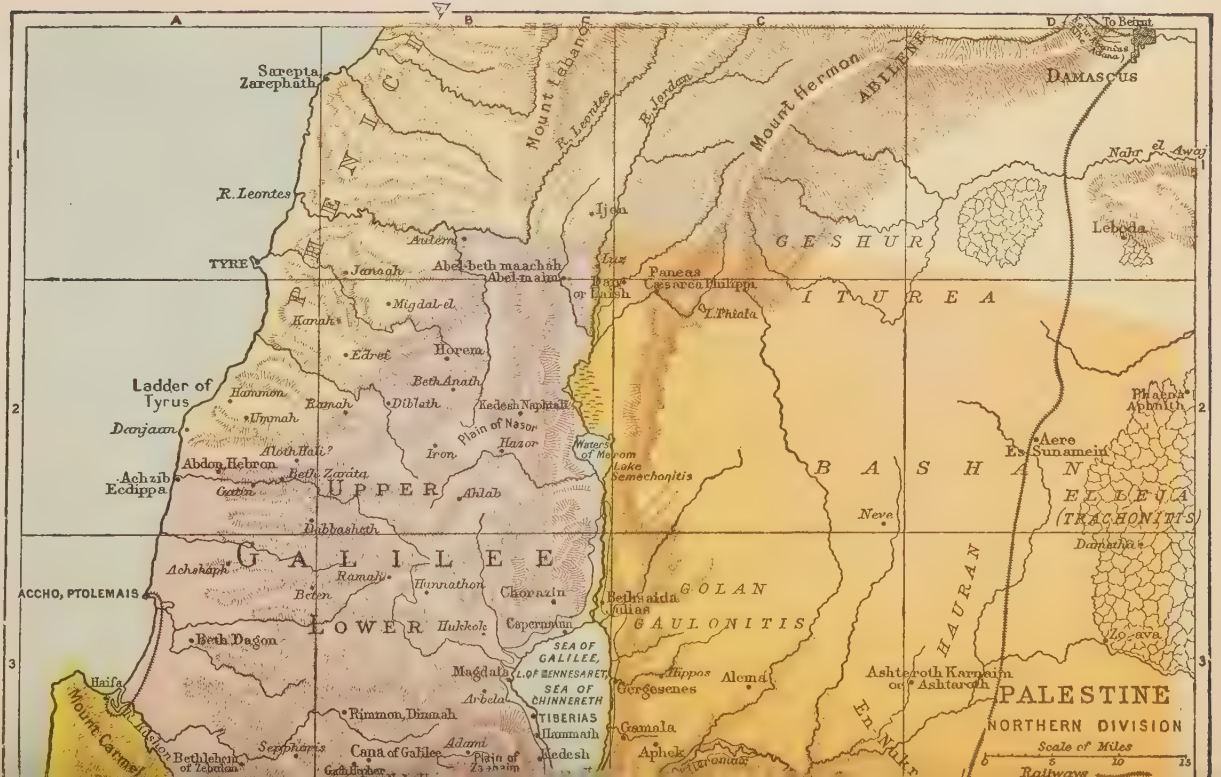


No. 3.

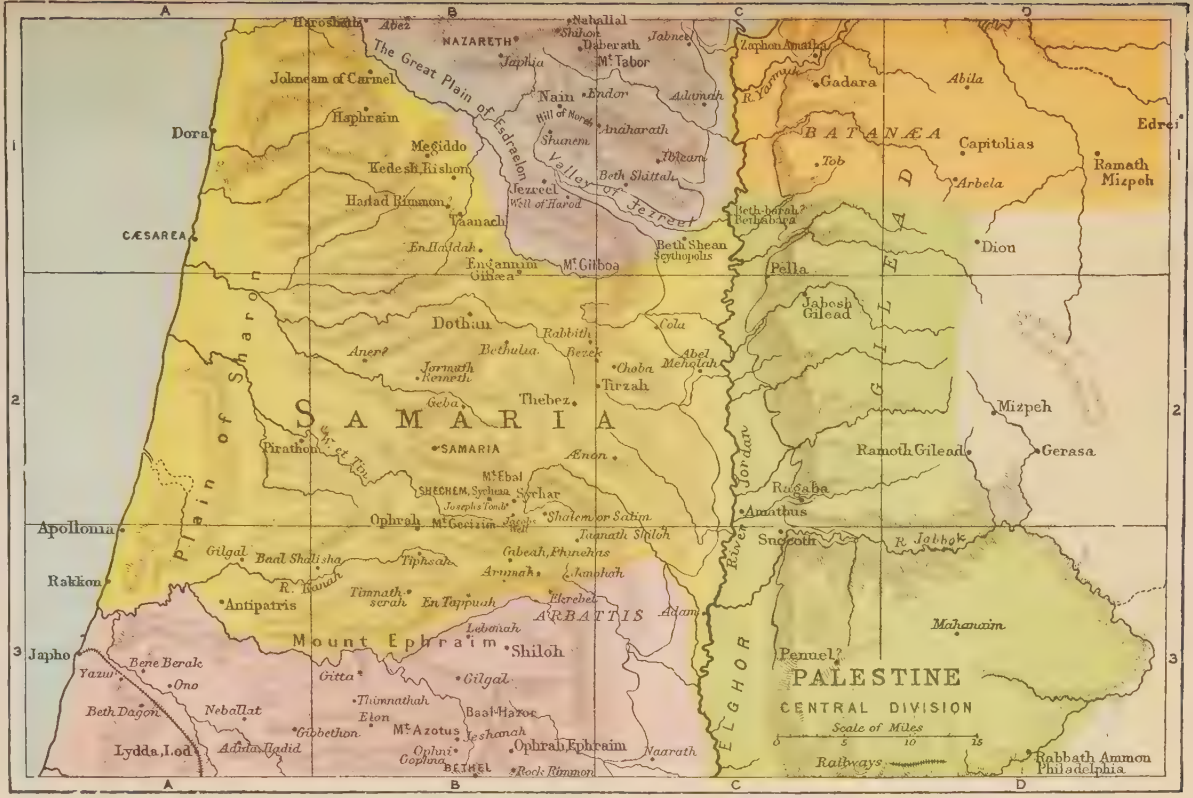

CANAAN
as divided among
THE TWELVE TRIBES
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30
Cities of Refuge are underlined
Longitude East 35° of Greenwich
THE DOMINIONS OF DAVID & SOLOMON
0 20 40 60 80 100 Miles
Zidon
Zarephath
Tyre
Kanah
Horem
Ladder of Tyrus
Hammon
Kedesh Naphtali
Ramah
Hazor
Abdon, Hebron
Achzib
NAPHTALI
ASHER
ACCHO
Hannathon
Hukkok
Beth Dagon
Cabul
Rimmon
ZEBULON
Hammath
Harosheth
Dabereth
Mt Tabor
Chesulloth
Endor
Adami
Jokneam
Megiddo
I S S A C H A R
Jezreel
Jaanach
Beth Shean
Gilboa
Engannim
Dothan
Abel Meholah
Tirzah
Thebez
MANASSEH
SAMARIA
Mt Ebal
Shechem
Sychar
Mt Gerizim
Gilgal
Rakkon
Mt Jarkon
Timnath Serah
Mount Ephraim
Shiloh
JOPPA or Japho
Bene Berak
Jehud
EPHRAIM
Gilgal
DAN
Lod
Ophrah
BETHEL
Rock Rimmon
Ai Hai Aiath
BENJAMIN
JERICHO
Jabneel
Ekron
Lower Beth Horon
Upper Beth Horon
Gezer
Gibeon
Geba
Michmash
Anathoth
Gilgal
Ajalon
Valley of Sorek
Zorah
JERUSALEM
Mt of Olives
Ashdod
Timnath
Beth Shemesh
Kiriath Jearim
BETHLEHEM
Brook Kidron
Ashkelon
Adullam
Gedor
Tekoe
Valley of Elah
Eglon
Mareshah
Plains of Mamre
JUDAH
HEBRON
GAZA
Lachish
Adoraim
Dumah
Ziph
Engedi
Sharuhen
Debir
Carmel
Wilderness of Judah
En Rimmon
Eshtemoa
Maon
Jattir
BEERSHEBA
Arad
Adadah
City of Salt
Aroer
NEGEB
Bared ?
Rehoboth
Ziklag
S I M E O N
Jordan
THE SALT SEA
Arnon
Ar of Moab
Kabbath Moab
Kir of Moab
The Dead Sea
Zered
Mount Lebanon
R Leontes
Abel beth maachah
Ijon or Vaugh
GESHUR
Mount Hermon
Nahr el Awaj
Aero
BASHAN
Waters of Merom
GOLAN
Golan
Ashteroth Karnaim
MANASSEH
Aphek
Sea of Chinnereth
R Jordan
Mount Tabor
Jabbok
HAURAN
HAVOTH JAIR
Edrei
Ramath Mizpeh
LAND OF TOB
Tob
Arbela
Bozrah
GAD
Jabesh Gilead
Succoth
Ramoth Gilead
Gerasa
Mahanaim
Penuel
Jogbehah
Rabbath Ammon
Beth Nimrah
Heshbon
Elealeh
Beth Jesimoth
Mt Pisgah
Mt Nebo
Medeba
Beth Peor
REUBEN
Ataroth
Kirjathaim
Beer
Dibon
Aroer
Bamoth
Damascus
Abana
Pharpar
Hermon
Tyre
Sidon
Zarephath
Carmel
Megiddo
Jezreel
Jordan
Jericho
Jerusalem
Hebron
Gaza
Rabbath Moab
Tophel
Elath
Desert of Paran
Great Desert
ARAM OR SYRIA
Damascus
Tadmor Palmyra
Euphrates
Hamath
Zobah
Beth Rehob
Tahpanhes
Daughter of the Nations
Cobal
Berothai
Sidon
Tyre
Sea of Galilee
Jordan
Jericho
Jerusalem
Hebron
Gaza
Rabbath Moab
Tophel
Elath

No. 4.
Cappadocia
LANDS OF NAIRI
URARTU
Mt Ararat
L. Van
Mt Niphates
L. Urum
Mt Taurus
Cilicia
Amanos Mts
R. Euphrates
Tarsus
Carchemish (Jerablus)
Orfa or Edessa
Mt Masios
R. Tigris
ASSURIA
MESOPOTAMIA
Gozan
Haran
R. Chabor
NINEVEH
Arbela
Mt Zagros
Antioch
Arpad
Padan-Aram
Resen
Calah
Nimroud
R. Orontes
SYRIA (ARAM)
Laodicea
Tiphsah
Asshur
Rezpeh
Hamath
Arvad
Karkar
Rehoboth
Tripolis
Kadesh of the Hittites
Samarah
Halah
Behistun
Gebal
Tadmor (Palmyra)
Mt Lebanon
Hena
R. Euphrates
Berytus
KASHI
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Mt Hermon
Dan
Ahava, Ivah (Hit)
Syrian Desert
Agade
ELAM
Sippar
Sepharvaim
Kutha
Acco
Carmel
Megiddo
Bashan
BABYLONIA
Susa
Shushan
Dothan
Samaria
Shechem
Calneh
R. Tigris
SUSIANA
Ashdod
Askelon
Jericho
Jerusalem
LAND OF SHINAR
CHALDEA
Gath
Gaza
Hebron
Dead Sea
Heshbon
Ammon
Erech
Gerar
Beersheba
Dibon
Moab
Eridhu
ARABIA
ASSYRIA
& OTHER COUNTRIES ADJOINING CANAAN
ILLUSTRATING THE CAPTIVITIES OF THE JEWS
Scale of Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140
GREAT SEA
SYRIA
Mt Lebanon
Valley of Lebanon
Mt Hermon
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Dan or Laish
Kedesh
Waters of Merom
BASHAN
Acchor
Sea of Chinnereth
Mt Carmel
Mt Tabor
Shunem
Kanath
Jezreel
ISRAEL
Zereth
Mt Gilboa
Bezeck
Salcah
Samaria
Mt Ebal
Ramoth Gilead
Mt Gerizim
R. Jabbok
Shechem
Joppa
Mahanaim
Jericho
Rabbath Ammon
Ashdod
Mt Nebo
Jaza
Jerusalem
Hebron
JUDAH
Salt Sea
THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH & ISRAEL
0 10 20 30 40 Miles

PALESTINE
FROM THE RAISED MAP
constructed from the Surveys of the
PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.
BY GEORGE ARMSTRONG ESQR
Secretary to the Fund
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30
Sidon
PHENICIA
Mount Lebanon
R. Jordan
Mount Hermon
DAMASCUS
TYRE
R. Leontes
Dan
Waters of Merom
BASHAN
GALILEE
Sea of Galilee
R. Kishon
Mt. Carmel
NAZARETH
R. Yarmuk
DECAPOLIS
CÆSAREA
Dothan
SAMARIA
SAMARIA
Sychar
R. Jordan
R. Jabbok
Apollonia
Mahanaim
Joppa
Shiloh
Penuel
AMMON
BETHEL
JERICHO
Azotus
JERUSALEM
Bethany
Askelon
BETHLEHEM
JUDÆA
GAZA
HEBRON
DEAD SEA
R. Arnon
MOAB
BEERSHEBA
EDOM OR IDUMEA

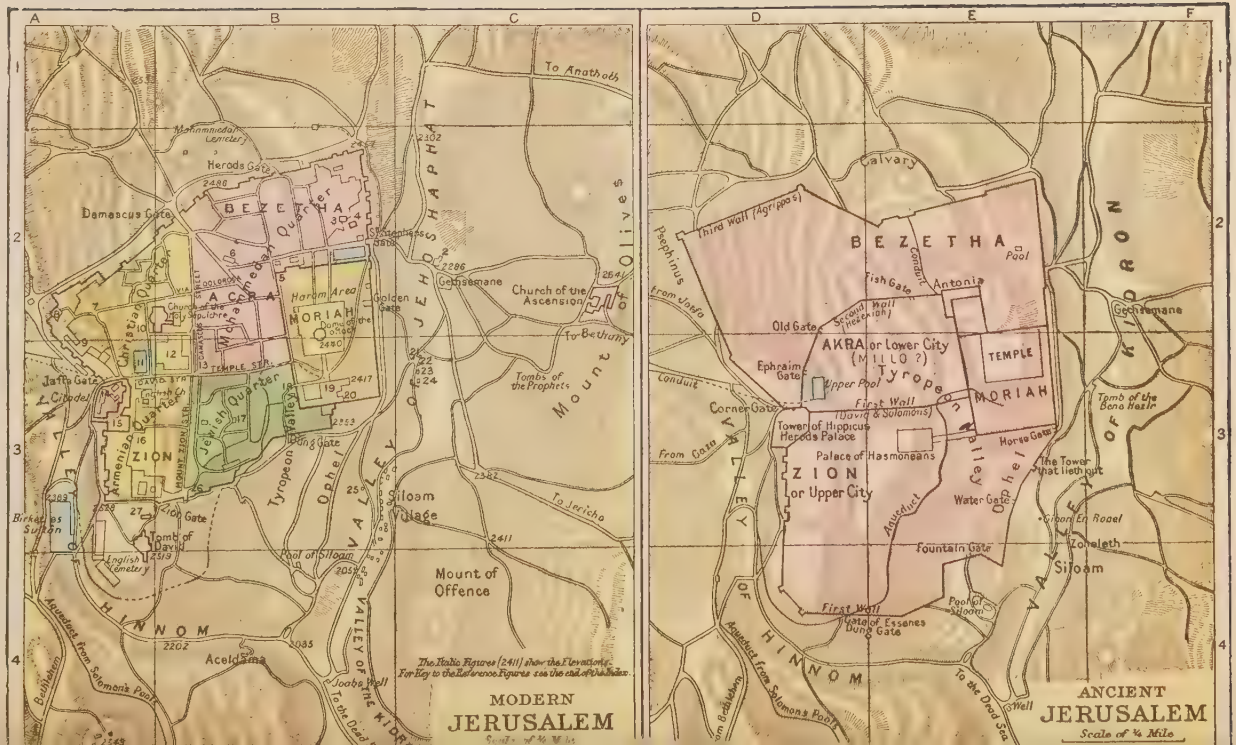

A
B
C
D
To Beirut
Sarepta
Zarephath
PHOENICIA
Mount Lebanon
R. Leontes
R. Jordan
Mount Hermon
ABILENE
DAMASCUS
Nahr el Awaj
Lebeda
TYRE
Ijon
Autem
Janoah
Abel-beth maachah
Abel-maim
Luz
Paneas
Caesarea Philippi
or Laish
GESHUR
ITUREA
L. Phiala
Migdal-el
Kanah
Edrei
Horem
Beth Anath
Ladder of Tyrus
Hammon
Rumah
Diblath
Kedesh Naphtali
Ummah
Plain of Nasor
Iron
Hazor
Waters of Merom
Lake Semechonitis
Phiatra
Aphmith
Aere
Es-Sunamein
Daniaan
Aloth Hak?
Abdon, Hebron
Beth Zavita
Achzib
Ecdippa
Gatin
UPPER
Ahlab
BASHAN
ELEJA
(TRACHONITIS
Neve
Dabbasheth
GALILEE
Damatha
Achshaph
Ramah
Hannathon
Chorazin
ACCHO, PTOLEMAIS
Beten
GOLAN
Bethsaida Julias
GAULONITIS
LOWER
Hukkok
Capernaum
HAURAN
Beth Dagon
SEA OF GALILEE, L. OF GENNESARET, SEA OF CHINNERETH
Magdala
Hippos
Alema
Gergesenes
Ashteroth Karnaim or Ashteroth
PALESTINE
NORTHERN DIVISION
Haifa
Mount Carmel
Arbela
TIBERIAS
Rimmon, Dimnah
Gamala
Hammath
Sepphoris
Cana of Galilee
Adami
Plain of Zaanaim
Kedesh
Aphek
Bethlehem of Zebulon
Gathhepher
Scale of Miles
Railways

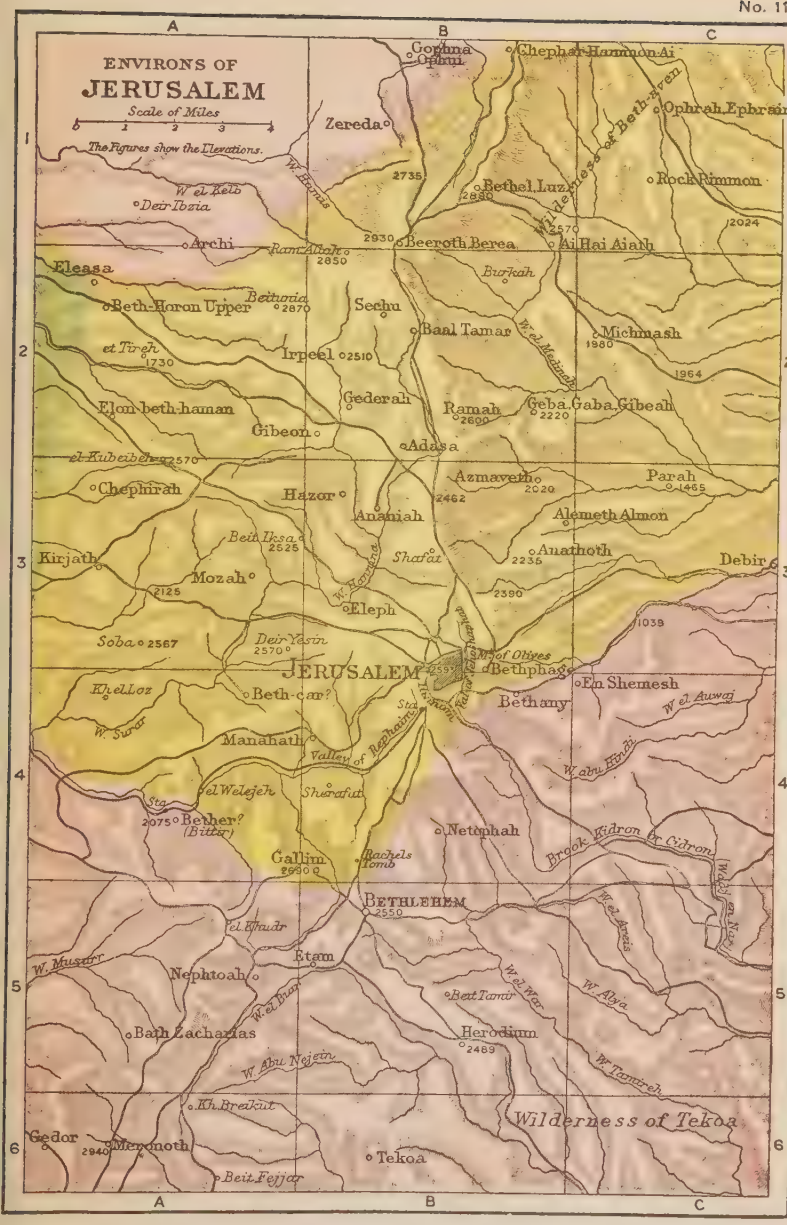
No. 6.


A
B
C
D
1
2
3
Haroshath
Abez
NAZARETH
Nahallal
Shihon
Daberath
Jabneel
Japhia
Mt. Tabor
The Great Plain of Esdraelon
Johneam of Carmel
Nain
Endor
Adiundi
Hill of Moreh
Haphraim
Anaharath
Dora
Megiddo
Shunem
Ibleam
Kedesh Rishon
Valley of Jezreel
Beth Shittah
Jezreel
Well of Harod
Hadad Rimmon
Taanach
CÆSAREA
En Haddah
Engannim
Gilboa
Mt. Gilboa
Beth Shean
Scythopolis
Dothan
Rabbith
Bethulia
Bezek
Choba
Abel Meholah
Tirzah
Thebez
Geba
SAMARIA
SAMARIA
Pirathon
Mt. of Tow
Ænon
Mt. Ebal
SHECHEM, Sychæa
Sychar
Joseph's Tomb
Ophrah
Mt. Gerizim
Shalem or Salim
Tanath Shiloh
Apollonia
Gilgal
Beal Shalisha
Tiphsah
Gibeah, Phinehas
Rakkon
R. Kanah
Timnath serah
En Tappuah
Elkrebes
ARBATTIS
Adam
Antipatris
Lebonah
Mount Ephraim
Shiloh
Japho
Bene Berak
Yazur
Ono
Gittah
Gilgal
Thimnathah
Beth Dagon
Neballat
Elon
Baal-Haroc
Gibbethon
Mt. Azotus
Jeshanah
Lydda, Lod
Adida, Hadid
Ophni
Ophrah, Ephraim
Naarath
Gophna
BETHEL
Rock Rimmon
Plain of Sharon
Zaphon Amathis
Gadara
R. Jarmuk
Abila
BATANÆA
Capitolias
Edrei
Tob
Ramath Mizpeh
Arbela
Beth-barah, Bethabara
Dion
Pella
Jabesh Gilead
GILEAD
Mizpeh
Ramoth Gilead
Gerasa
Rugaba
Amathus
Succoth
R. Jabbok
River Jordan
Mahanaim
Penuel
PALESTINE
CENTRAL DIVISION
Scale of Miles
0
5
10
15
Railways
Rabbath Ammon
Philadelphia
No. 7.

A
To Jaffa
B
BETHEL
C
D
No. 8.
Tyrus
Beth Nimrah
Abel Shittim
Beth Haran
Zoar
Jazer
Elealeh
Jabneel Jabneh Jamnia
Elkon
Naaman
Gezer
Valley of Ajalon
Beth Horon Upper
Lower
Ginzo
Bildath
Archi
Ai Hai Aiath
Bocheth
Michmash
JERICHO
Gilgal
Shittim Valley
Beth Jeshimoth
Jesimoth
Abelsittim
Pisgah
Heshbon
Mt Nebo
Maldedah
Emmaus Nicopolis
Ajalon
Gibeon
Ramah
Geba Gaba Gibeah
Almeth
Anathoth
Admmim
Beth Hoglah
Cedron Gederah
Valley of Sorek
Zorah
Chesalon
Mt Seir
JERUSALEM
Mt of Olives
Bethany
Mt Pisgah
Ashdod Azotus
Timnah or Timnath
Beth Shemesh
Kirjath Jearim
Zanoah
Brook Eshcol
Baal-el-Baal
Medeba
BETHLEHEM
Shepho is Field
Ashkelon Ashelon
Shaphir
Yagur
Gath
Valley of Jarmuth
Timnah
Nephtoah
Socoh
Azekah
Gibeah
Beth Zachariah
Berachah Valley
Beth Peor
Beth Meon
Baal Meon
Adullam
JUDÆA
Tekoa
Gedor
Ether
Nebo
Callirhoe
Ataroth
Eglon
Maresha
Holon Hilen
Nezib
Beth Zur
Halhul
Chareba
Cliff of Ziz
Beth Anoth
Kiriathaim
Makkaras
Lachish Tell el Hesy
Darmah
Plain of Mamre
Beth Tappuah
Adoraim
Strab. M.
GAZA
HEBRON
Janum
Dibon
Aroer
Etam
Ziph
Carmel
Shamir
Dumah
Juttah
Gerar
Debir
Arab
Shoruhen
Ashan
Zanoah
Eshtemoa
Maon
En Rimmon
Madmannah
Jattir
Anim
Masada
Ar of Moab
Rabbath Moab
PALESTINE
SOUTHERN DIVISION
Scale of Miles
Joshua
Aroer
BEERSHEBA
Shuba
Adadah
DEAD SEA, THE SALT SEA
1292 ft. below Mediterranean
1
2
3

PALESTINE
illustrating
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30
Sarepta
PHŒNICIA
Mount Lebanon
R. Jordan
Mount Hermon
N. Abana (The Abana)
DAMASCUS
Nahr el Awaj
Leboda
Ijon
Ban or Dan
Cæsarea Philippi
TYRE
R. Leontes
Abel-beth-maachah
ITUREA
Horem
Ladder of Tyrus
Hammon
Kedesh Naphtali
Ramah
Hukkok
Hazor
Waters of Merom
Aere
Achzib
Ecdippa
Abdon
Mebron
BASHAN
GALILEE
GAULONITIS
Ptolemais
Caphar Hananiah
Chorazin
Capernaum
Bethsaida Julias
TETRARCHY
Zoraves
Beth Dagon
Hippos
Gergesenes
Ashteroth Karnaim
Rimmon
Magdala
Sea of Galilee or L. of Gennesaret
TIBERIAS
OF PHILIP
Cana of Galilee
Tarichææ
Sepphoris
Hasrosheth
NAZARETH
BATANÆA
ITURÆA
Daberath
Mt Tabor
R. Kishon
Mount Gilboa
Jezreel
Ginæa
DECAPOLIS
Gadara
Edrei
Dora
Megiddo
Nain
Endor
Ramath Mizpeh
Hadad Rimmon
Taanach
Bethshean Scythopolis
Malloth
Bethabara
Arbela
CÆSAREA
Dion
Bozrah Bostra
Pella
Dothan
Tirzah
Jabesh Gilead
SAMARIA
Thebez
SAMARIA
Ænon
Mt Ebal
Shechem
Sychar
Salim
Gerasa
Ramoth Gilead
Apollonia
Caphar Saba
Mt Gerizim
Succoth
R. Jabbok
Plain of Sharon
River Jordan
PEREA
Antipatris
En-tappuah
Archelais
JOPPA
Mount Ephraim
Shiloh
Penuel
Timnath-Serah
Gilgal
Phasaelis
Philadelphia
Lydda
Gophna
Ephraim
BETHEL
Rock Rimmon
Lower
Beth Horon
Upper
Ai-ha-Michmash
JERICHO
Jamnia
Accaron
Gibeon
Ajalon
Nicopolis
Emmaus
Zorah
Jearim
Anuthoth
Mt of Olives
Clealah
Heshbon
Azotus
JERUSALEM
Bethany
Beth-Jesimoth
Mt Pisgah
Mt Nebo
Medeba
Beth-Shemesh
Kirjath
BETHLEHEM
Ascalon
Gath
Adullam
Tekoa
JUDÆA
Eglon
Mareshah
Calirrhoe
Machærus
GAZA
Lachish
HEBRON
Ziph
Engedi
Anthedon
DAROMA
Debir
Carmel
Maon
Arnon
Gerar
En Rimmon
Jattir
Masada
Arad
BEERSHEBA
City of Salt
Arder
IDUMÆA
Bered ?
Ziklag ?
Rehoboth
The Brook Zered
Mt Tophel
Longitude East 35° of Greenwich
SYRIA
Damascus
Ptolemais
GALILEE
SAMARIA
Joppa
Jamnia
Azotus
Jerusalem
Gazara
JUDEA
ARABIA


A
B
C
D
E
F
1
2
3
4
To Anathoth
Mohammedan Cemetery
Herods Gate
2488
BEZETHA
Damascus Gate
Christian Quarter
ACRA
MORIAH
Harem Area
Dome of the Rock
Golden Gate
Church of the Sepulchre
Via Dolorosa
Gethsemane
Church of the Ascension
Mount of Olives
To Bethany
2641
2286
2302
JEHOSHAPHAT
VALLEY OF
Tombs of the Prophets
Jaffa Gate
Citadel
Armenian Quarter
Jewish Quarter
ZION
Tyropoeon Valley
Dung Gate
Siloam Village
To Jericho
Birket es Sultan
Iron Gate
Tomb of David
English Cemetery
Pool of Siloam
Mount of Offence
HINNOM
Aceldama
Aqueduct from Solomon's Pools
Bethlehem
To the Dead Sea
Joabs Well
Calvary
Third Wall (Agrippas)
Psephinus
from Vespasian
Tish Gate
Antonia
Pool
Conduit
Scopus
Nebi Samwil
Old Gate
AKRA or Lower City
(MILLO ?)
TEMPLE
Ephraim Gate
Upper Pool
Tyrope
First Wall (David & Solomons)
Corner Gate
Tomb of the Bene Hezir
Tower of Hippicus
Herods Palace
Horse Gate
From Gate
Palace of Hasmoneans
The Tower that lieth out
Water Gate
Fountain Gate
Siloam En Rogel
Tophet
Pool of Siloam
Essenes Gate
Well
ANCIENT
JERUSALEM
Scale of ¼ Mile
MODERN
JERUSALEM
The Italic Figures (2411) show the Elevations.
For Key to the Reference Figures see the end of the Index.


ENVIRONS OF
JERUSALEM
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3 4
The Figures show the Elevations.
A
B
C
1
2
3
4
5
6
Gophna
Ophni
Chephar-Hammon-Ai
Ophrah Ephraim
Zereda
W. Hanina
2735
Bethel Luz
2830
Wilderness of Beth-aven
Rock Rimmon
2570
2024
Deir Ibzia
W. el Kelt
Archi
Ram Allah
2850
2930
Beeroth Berea
Ai Hai Aiath
Eleasa
Burkah
Beth-Horon Upper
Bethoria
2870
Sechu
Baal Tamar
W. el Mesjideh
Michmash
1980
1964
et Tireh
1730
Irpeel
2510
Gederah
Ramah
2600
Geba Gaba Gibeah
2220
Elon-beth-hanan
Gibeon
Adasa
el Kubeibeh
2570
Azmaveth
2020
Parah
1465
Chephirah
Hazor
2462
Ananiah
Alemeth Almon
Beit Iksa
2525
Sharfat
Anathoth
2235
Kirjath
Mozah
2125
Debir
W. Kurtuba
Eleph
2390
1039
Soba
2567
Deir Yasin
2570
Mt. of Olives
Bethphage
JERUSALEM
2597
Kh. el Loz
Beth-car?
Sta.
Bethany
En Shemesh
W. el Auwaj
W. Surar
Manahath
Valley of Raphaim
W. abu Hindi
el Welejeh
Sherafat
Sta.
2075
Bether?
(Bitter)
Netophah
Gallim
2650
Rachels Tomb
Brook Kidron
Kr. Cidron
BETHLEHEM
2550
W. el Arrais
el Khudr
W. Musurr
Etam
Nephtoah
W. el Khas
Beit Tamar
W. el Nar
W. Alya
Bath Zacharias
Herodium
2489
W. Abu Nejem
W. Tamareh
Kh. Breikut
Wilderness of Tekoa
Gedor
2940
Meronoth
Tekoa
Beit Fejjar

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
16
20
24
28
32
36
ROME
Appii Forum
Puteoli
ITALY
Mare Hadriaticum
Dyrrachium
Brundisium
Tarentum
DALMATIA
MOESIA SUPERIOR
THRACIA
PONTUS EUXINUS
Sinope
Philippi
Amphipolis
Thessalonica
Berœa
Apollonia
MACEDONIA
Byzantium
Chalcedon
Propontis
PAPHLAGONIA
Amasia
PONTUS GALATICUS
BITHYNIA
Ancyra
Pessinus
GALATIA
Cyprus
Troy
Adramyttium
Assos
Lesbos
Pergamus
Thyatira
Mitylene
Sardis
Philadelphia
Antioch
CAPPADOCIA
Iconium
Mare Ionium
Co. cyra
THESSALIA
Actium
Locris
ACHAIA
Cephallenia
Zacynthus
Corinth
Cenchreæ
Athens
Euboea
Chios
Smyrna
Ephesus
Samos
Colossæ
Laodicea
Derbe
Lystra
PISIDIA
LYCAONIA
PHRYGIA
Tarsus
Panormus
Segesta
SICILIA
Syracuse
ADRIA
Patmos
Miletus
Perga
Attalia
CILICIA TRACHEA
Seleucia
Melita
Melos
Cythera
Crete
Rhodes
Tyre
CRETE
CYPRUS
Salamis
Paphos
Phœnice
Cauda
Mount Ida
Fair Havens
Tripolis
MARE INTERNUM
Chelæis
Sidon
Tyre
Ptolemais
Caesarea
Samaria
Joppa
Jerusalem
JUDÆA
Cyrene
CYRENAICA
Alexandria
SCENE OF PAUL'S JOURNEYS
& OF THE EARLY CHURCHES
Scale of Miles

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